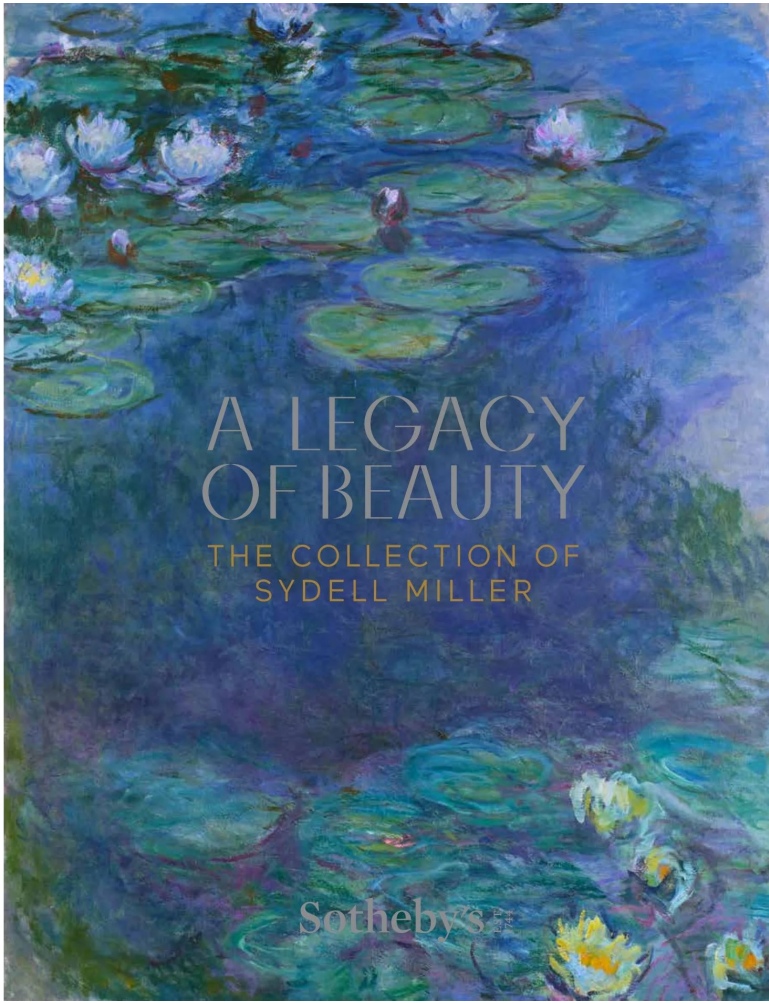




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A LEGACY OF BEAUTY: THE COLLECTION OF SYDELL MILLER

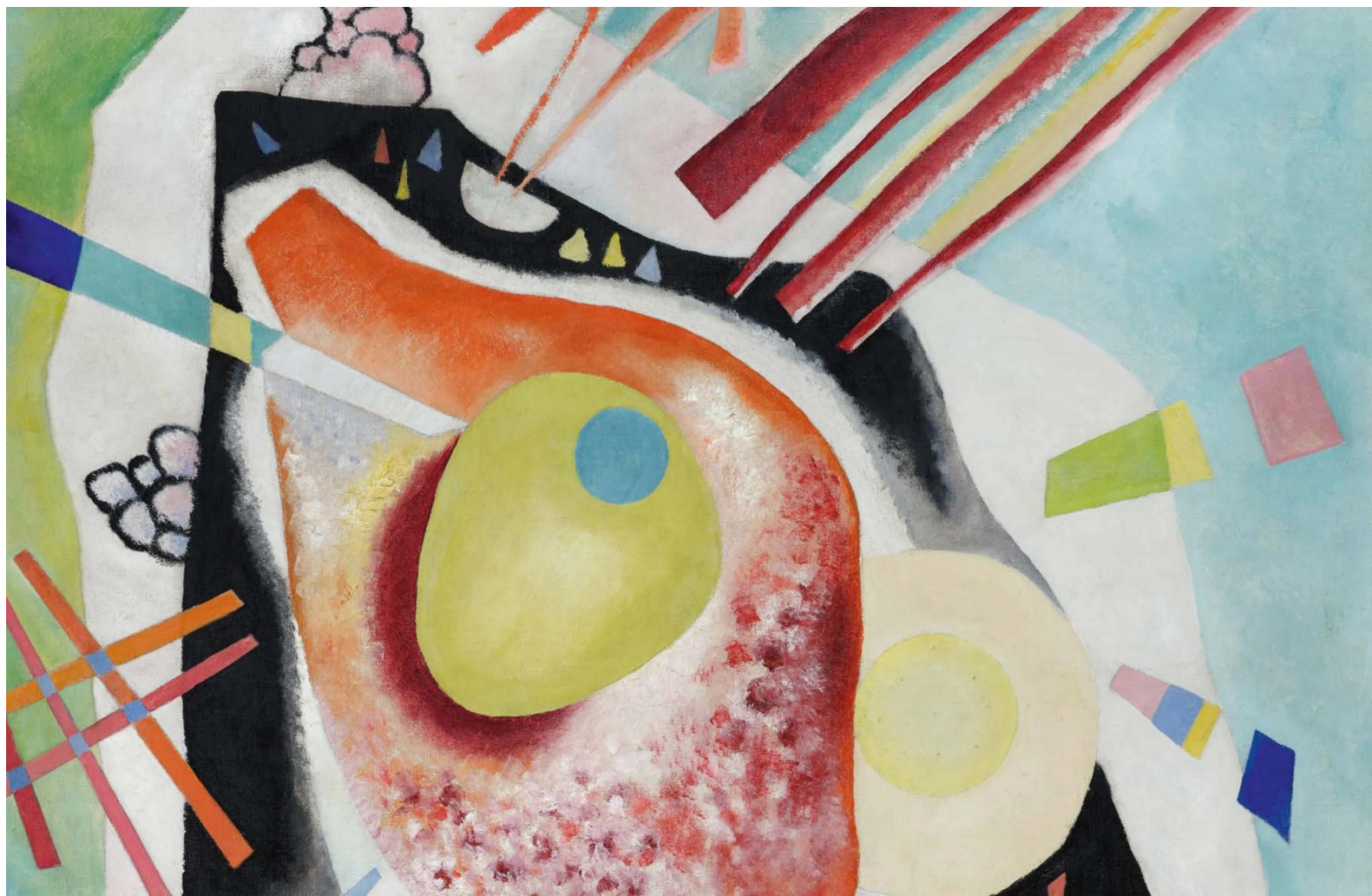
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A LEGACY  
OF BEAUTY  
THE COLLECTION OF  
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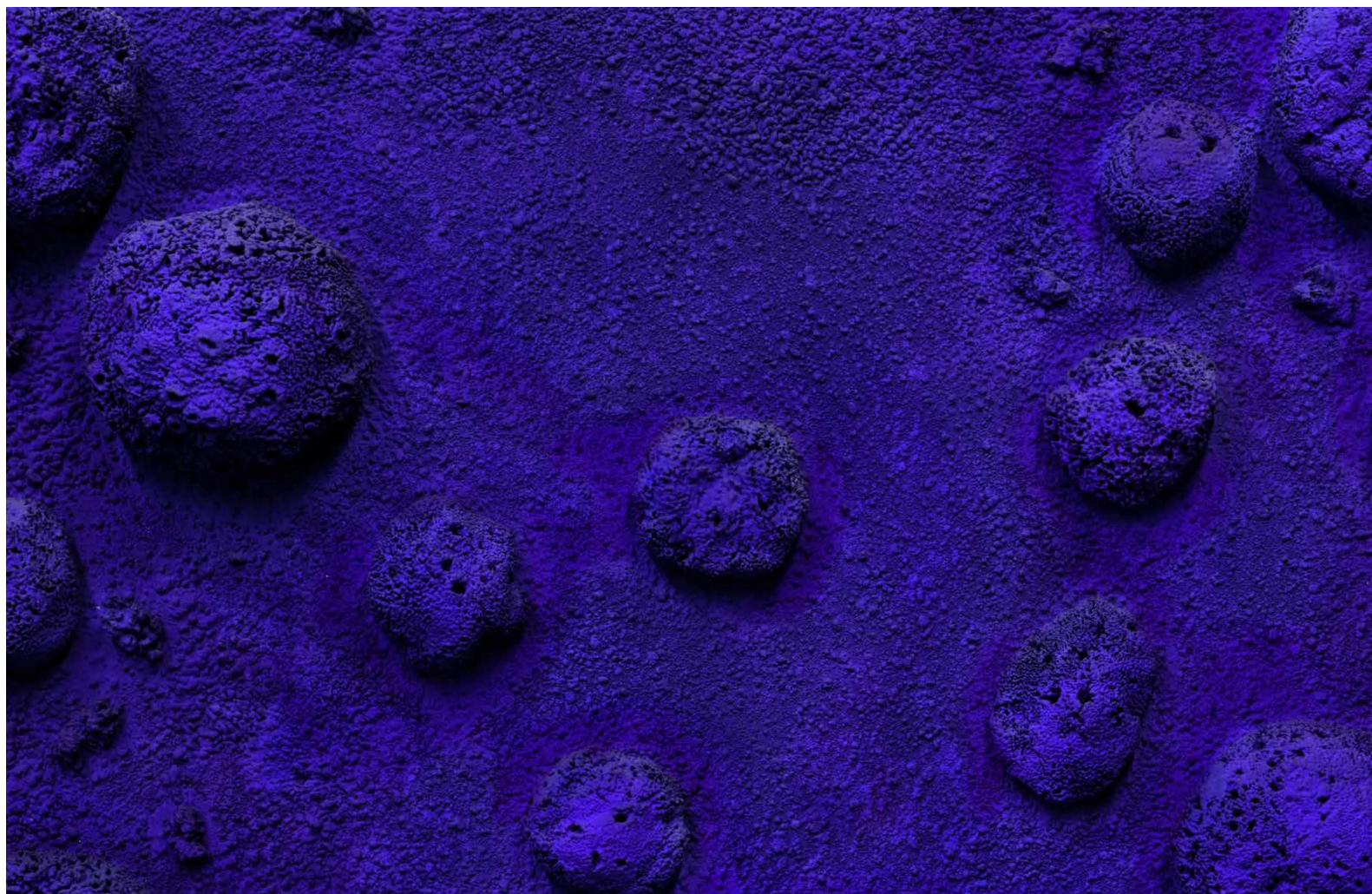


















# A LEGACY OF BEAUTY

THE COLLECTION OF  
SYDELL MILLER



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19 NOVEMBER 2024  
SALE N11626  
9 AM

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ONLINE AUCTION  
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SALE N11627  
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11 AM ON 16 DECEMBER

THE COLLECTION OF  
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THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER  
10 AM-5 PM

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10 AM-5 PM

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER  
10 AM-5 PM

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER  
1 PM-5 PM

MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER  
10 AM-1 PM





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# A LEGACY OF BEAUTY

## THE COLLECTION OF SYDELL MILLER

Sydel Miller lived a life of beauty—one defined not just by her own embodiment of the idea, but also by her tireless dedication to the businesses and institutions based upon it. From her earliest enterprises into fashion and later salon care, to her instinctively curated collection of fine art and design, Sydel harnessed the power of creative potential and created an aesthete's dream—the legacy of which lives on today through her family and generous philanthropic endeavors.

“BEING AROUND BEAUTIFUL PAINTINGS AND  
DECORATIVE OBJECTS IN THE COMFORT  
OF MY PERSONAL SPACES BRINGS BEAUTY  
AND CALM INTO MY LIFE EVERY DAY.”

- SYDELL MILLER

It was in a Cleveland salon in the late 1950s that the wheels of fate were set in motion. There Sydel Lubin met Arnold Miller, the young stylist and salon owner who had been recommended to her by a friend. A smitten Arnold asked her on a date, and when she inquired, “which night,” his response was simply, “all of them.” One week and a whirlwind succession of dates later, the two were engaged.

Over the ensuing years together, the two would expand upon the early success of the salon, venturing into womenswear and salon products. In every endeavor, it was their belief in kindness to others, and the beauty of generosity, which guided them. With this leading principle, the Millers built upon their first-hand knowledge of their clients' needs as well as those of salon professionals and created a beauty empire. Together they created Ardell (a fusion of their first names), the transformational eyelash company which first introduced eyelashes as a professional salon service. In 1980, the pair started another trailblazing beauty company, Matrix, the largest and most innovative manufacturer of professional hair and beauty products. With Arnold in the role of the creative innovator and spokesperson, and Sydel as the dream maker behind the scenes, taking on everything from marketing and accounting to human resources, the Millers empowered individuals to tap into their personal beauty and artistry—creating thousands of local jobs in the process. Sydel believed that beauty did not stop at the hairline, which led her to create the concept of the day spa and taught salon owners how to offer new services in their salons, making the spa experience accessible to all women. After her husband's passing in 1992, Sydel took over as CEO and President of Matrix, more





than doubling their annual sales before selling the company in 1994. A woman whose passion, drive, influence and integrity touched more than seven million women per week internationally, Sydel was an inspiring role model to women in business.

Having devoted a decades-long career to the business of beauty, Sydel then focused her full attention family, philanthropy and collecting. With renewed time and energy, she began collecting artwork in earnest, guided by her innate taste and informed by countless family visits to galleries, museums and auctions. Sydel once recounted: "I collect pieces I love. Each piece I collect speaks to me in a language of art and design and always excited me when I saw them for the first time. Even today these pieces still make my heart flutter with joy. I never collected from just one period in time or style. Always collected things that I connected to through their beauty."

From the playfully chic *Elephant Table* by François-Xavier Lalanne and elegant *Nénuphar* consoles by Claude Lalanne, to epoch-defining canvases like Monet's *Nymphéas* and Kandinsky's *Weisses Oval* and monuments to Modernism like Picasso's *La Statue* and Klein's entrancing *Relief Éponge bleu sans titre, (RE 28)*, Sydel Miller's collection speaks to the awe-inspiring power of beauty in all its forms. The works brought together in this collection tell the story of one woman's impeccable eye and inveterate dedication to her passions. The collection exemplifies her family's mantra: Think, Believe, Dare, Dream. Like Sydel, the artists and designers represented in this book defied the boundaries set before them, striving for beauty and transformation in their craft and leaving indelible marks on the history of art.

Sydel's art-filled home was set across a whole floor of The Bristol in West Palm Beach. Within those walls, one could see the evolution of a collector over many decades, and a pioneering journey of art and design that is entirely unique. The project was the result of close collaboration between Sydel and her daughter Stacie Halpern. Stacie played a significant role in the interior design, while Sydel









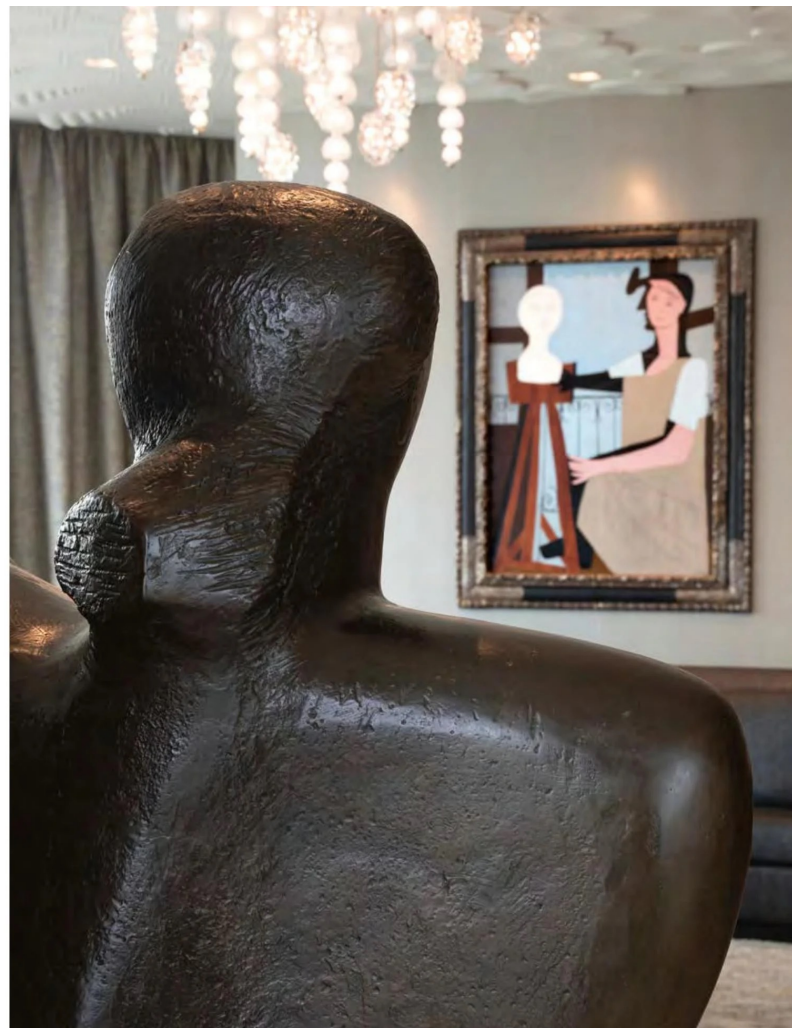
"I HAVE GIVEN PASSIONATELY AND WITH GREAT HONOR TO MANY ORGANIZATIONS. I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED IN DOING MY PART TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR ALL."

- SYDELL MILLER

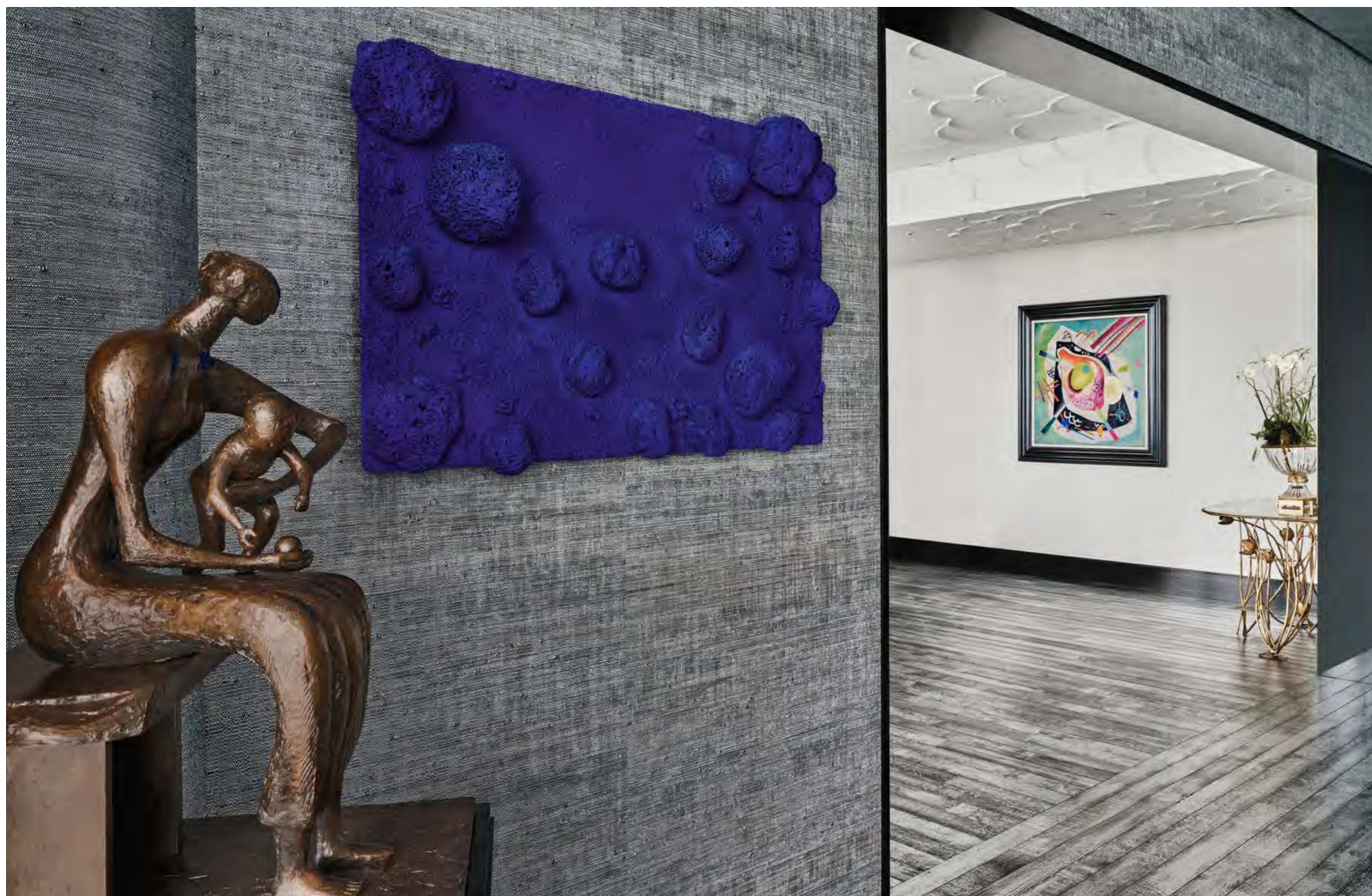
oversaw the curation of the works of fine art and design. Together, they created a richly layered aesthetic dialogue spanning the history of art from the 18th through 21st centuries.

Such a passion for beauty was not limited to her collecting endeavors, however. Sydel was an exceptional entertainer, a graceful hostess, a fashion icon and a beloved individual. She was in the words of those close to her, "as sweet as the chocolate she loved." She epitomized elegance—both through her sophisticated style and her nurturing personality. Despite Sydel's unparalleled career accomplishments, it was her roles as friend, sister, mother and grandmother that she cherished most.

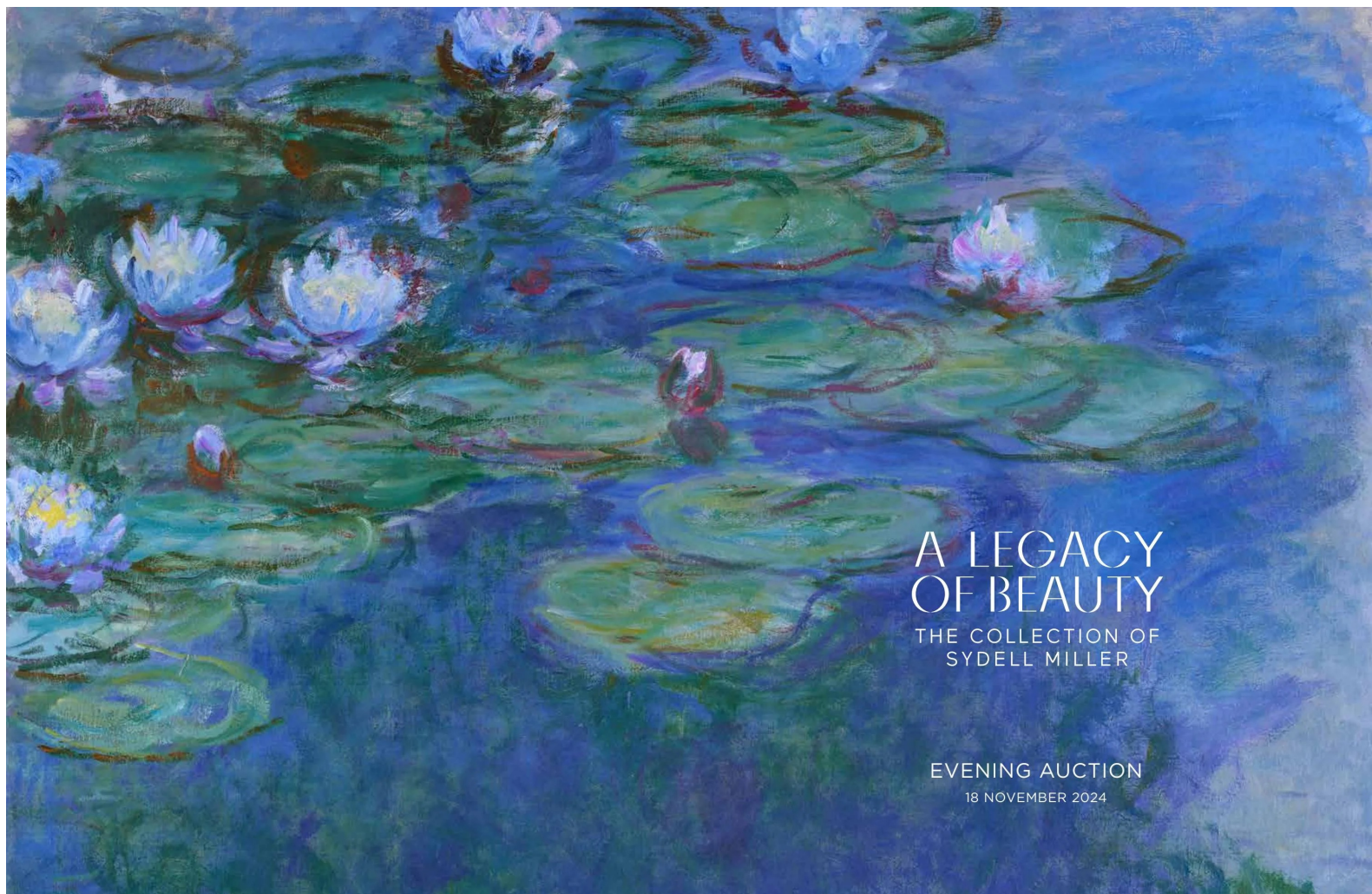
Guided by a prevailing spirit of generosity, the Miller name is equally synonymous with charitable giving—another avenue by which Sydel's admirable beliefs benefitted others. In her later life especially, Sydel's devotion to philanthropy took center stage. She served on the boards of the American Cancer Society of Palm Beach, BBSI, the Cleveland Clinic, Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, Norton Museum of Art, Palm Beach Civic Association and Palm Beach County United Way. Among the many institutions and causes that she championed was the Cleveland Clinic, home to the Sydel & Arnold Miller Family Pavilion and Heart and Vascular Institute. Her remarkable legacy lives on in these philanthropic endeavors, and in tribute to her commitment, a portion of the auction's proceeds will benefit Cleveland Clinic Women's Comprehensive Health and Research Center, the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Sydel L. Miller Elephant Care & Visitor Center at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.











# A LEGACY OF BEAUTY

THE COLLECTION OF  
SYDELL MILLER

EVENING AUCTION

18 NOVEMBER 2024



# I EDGAR DEGAS

1834 - 1917

## GRANDE ARABESQUE, TROISIÈME TEMPS

stamped Degas and with the foundry mark  
A.A. Hébrard Cire Perdue and numbered 16/T  
bronze

length: 22 1/4 in. 57.5 cm.

Conceived in wax circa 1882-95 and cast  
in bronze by the A.A. Hébrard Foundry,  
Paris from 1913.

\$ 400,000-600,000

### PROVENANCE

Mme. de Maistre, Paris  
The Lefevre Gallery (Alex Reid & Lefevre, Ltd.), London  
Private Collection, London  
Sotheby's, London, 2 December 1986, lot 12  
(consigned by the above)  
Private Collection, Los Angeles (acquired at the  
above sale and until at least 1995)  
Private Collection (acquired by descent from  
the above)  
Galerie Hopkins-Custot, Paris (acquired from  
the above)  
Susan Seidel, Inc., New York  
Acquired from the above in 2001 by the present owner

### EXHIBITED

London, The National Gallery (on extended loan  
from 1983-85)

### LITERATURE

John Rewald, *Degas: Works in Sculpture. A Complete  
Catalogue*, New York, 1944, no. XL, p. 24, p. 95,  
illustration of another cast

Lillian Browse, *Degas Dancers*, London, 1949,  
no. 155, n.p., illustration of another cast; p. 388

Exh. Cat., Charles E. Slatkin Galleries, *Renoir, Degas:  
A Loan Exhibition of Drawings, Pastels, Sculptures*,  
1958, no. 24, pl. XVII, illustration of another cast

John Rewald and Leonard von Matt, *L'Oeuvre  
sculpté de Degas*, London, 1957, no. XL, pl. 33,  
illustration of another cast

Pierre Cabanne, *Edgar Degas*, Paris, 1959, pl. IX,  
illustration of another cast

Franco Russoli and Fiorella Minervino, *L'Opera  
completa di Degas*, Milan, 1970, no. 58, p. 140,  
illustration of another cast

Charles W. Millard, *The Sculpture of Edgar Degas*,  
Princeton, 1976, no. 91, illustration of the wax

Exh. Cat., London, The Lefevre Gallery,  
*The Complete Sculpture of Degas*, 1976, no. 8,  
p. 10; p. 27, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Florence, Palazzo Strozzi and Verona,  
Palazzo Forti, *Degas Sculture*, 1986, p. 181,  
illustrations of another cast

Exh. Cat., London, Arts Council of Great Britain,  
*The Sculptures of Degas*, 1982, p. 17, pl. 19,  
illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Art Institute of Chicago, *Degas*, 1984,  
p. 155, illustration of another cast

Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge, *Degas*,  
New York, 1988, p. 208, illustrations of another cast

John Rewald, *Degas's Complete Sculpture:  
Catalogue Raisonné*, San Francisco, 1990, no. XL,  
p. 118, illustration of the wax; p. 119, illustration of  
another cast

Anne Pingot, *Degas Sculptures*, Paris, 1991, no. 7,  
pp. 68-71 and 155-56, illustrations of another cast

Sara Campbell, "A Catalogue of Degas' Bronzes,"  
*Apollo*, vol. CXLIII, no. 402, 1995, no. 16, p. 18,  
illustration of another cast; p. 19

Joseph S. Czeszochowski and Anne Pingot, *Degas  
Sculptures, Catalogue Raisonné of the Bronzes*,  
Memphis, 2002, no. 16, p. 152, illustration in color  
of another cast; p. 153, illustration of another cast  
and of the wax version

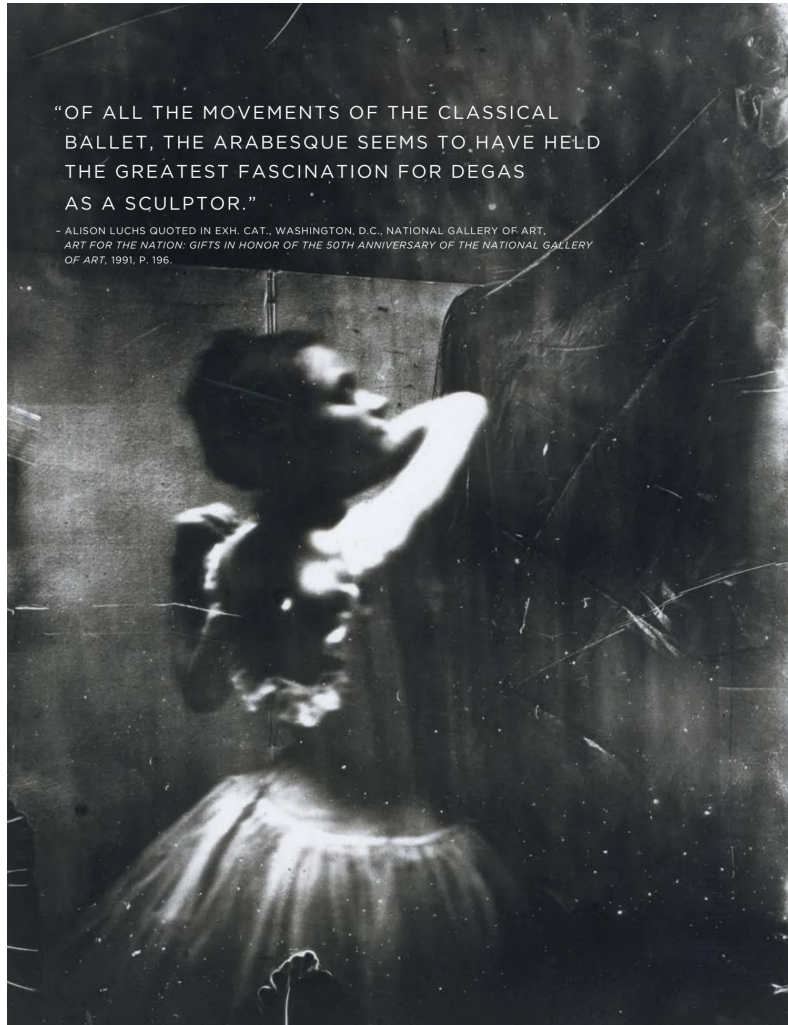
Sara Campbell, Richard Kendall, Daphne Barbour  
and Shelley Sturman, eds., *Degas in the Norton  
Simon Museum, Nineteenth-Century Art*, vol. II,  
Pasadena, 2009, no. 68, pp. 358-61, illustrations  
in color of another cast; p. 514

Exh. Cat., Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek,  
*Degas' Method*, 2013, no. 130, p. 306, illustration  
in color of another cast; p. 307



"OF ALL THE MOVEMENTS OF THE CLASSICAL BALLET, THE ARABESQUE SEEMS TO HAVE HELD THE GREATEST FASCINATION FOR DEGAS AS A SCULPTOR."

— ALISON LUCHS QUOTED IN EXH. CAT., WASHINGTON, D.C., NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, *ART FOR THE NATION: GIFTS IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART*, 1991, P. 196.



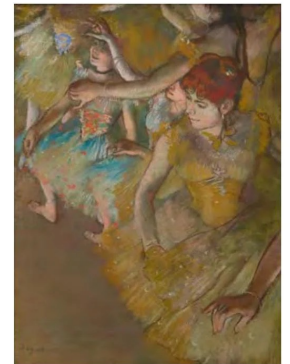
ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 1 Edgar Degas,  
*La Petite Danseuse  
de quatorze ans*,  
1878-1881.  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C.

BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Edgar Degas,  
*Danseuse en scène*,  
1883. Dallas Museum  
of Art.

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 3 Edgar Degas,  
*Danseuse*, circa 1890

The female muse has served as the undisputed cornerstone of the iconography that seeded the evolution of Impressionism and early modern art from the end of the nineteenth century into the twentieth. Amid a canonized lexicon of models who became the fixation of their sculptors, none is perhaps more readily recognizable than Edgar Degas' dancers. Over the course of his monumental career, Degas dedicated over half of his oeuvre to the study of the ballerina as a motif, and the ballet as theme. The strength of pose and diligence of modeling eloquently articulated in the present *Grande arabesque, troisième temps*, however, speaks to an understanding of ballet as an art form that far exceeds the dilettante admiration of a viewer watching from the audience in a theater. From his earliest handling of the subject, Degas demonstrates an equal reverence for the stage as he does the rehearsal studio, relishing in the public spectacle of ballet performances with the same fascination that he does the anecdotal moments which surrounded them. Isolated in bronze, his sculptural renderings of ballerinas, of which the present work is a most dynamic example, come to serve as a visual encyclopedia of the dance's basic positions and a stunning testament to his career-long devotion to the motif.

The present sculpture is the third and most dramatically expressive of three related versions of the pose—*premier, deuxième* and *troisième temps*. The numbering of the positions does not correspond to those of the official ballet repertoire but constitute a sequence of movement that Degas imagined and wanted to capture. The first shows the dancer in an upright pose; the second shows the dancer leaning forward, balanced on one leg, and the third (the present work) culminates in the highly balanced pose of the *grande arabesque*, in which the opposite arm and leg are fully extended, each acting in counterbalance to the other. In looking at Degas' photographs of the ballerinas in particular, it becomes evident that the abstract concept of movement was thematized in his distinctly figurative work on the subject (see fig. 3). Despite the solidity of its casting, *Grande arabesque, troisième temps* is a paradigm of his ability to imbue and retain a sense of motion within a static form.







When taken in the context of his broader study of the ballet, bronze works like the present come to stand as a distinctly physical and technical counterpart to the quotidian moments he captures in his celebrated pastels (see fig. 2). In the latter, expressive strokes and emphatic coloration come to communicate the active and potential movement inherent within the ballerina and her costume. The oscillation between the loose, airy application of the pastel describing the fleeting backdrops and his dancers' tutus, and the dense, blended technique used to describe their bodies comes to visualize the simultaneously ephemeral and physical nature of his theme. Rendered in bronze and sculpted in the round, however, *Grande arabesque, troisième temps* points not only to the gestural quality of ballet, but to the distinctly stylized and schematic postures which comprise its fluid movement. In confining her motion to a single pose, Degas transforms the sculpture into

an ode to the technical minutiae which is otherwise lost within her mesmerizing routine.

As such, at Degas' hand medium is transformed into a viscerally communicative idiom, inextricably linked to the motif it describes. If, as Degas declared, "drawing is... a way of seeing form," then sculpture was his most compelling means of realizing it (quoted in Paul Valéry, *The Collected Works, Volume XII: Degas, Manet, Morisot*, New York, 1960, p. 82). In the absence of color and gesture, the solidity of form and the remnants of Degas' modeling in plaster cemented in bronze confer on the work a distinctly tangible reality in which the physicality of the dancer is sublimated with that of the sculpted figure. The precarious balance of the present pose is particularly apt in conveying that relationship, as the viewer to Degas' work is made to marvel at his artistry as they do the dancer's.

It is perhaps also in his work in bronze that the distinction between his stylistic aspirations and those of his Impressionist peers is made most explicit. Though no less devoted to the observation of his subject, Degas' concerted fascination with form and figure confers a greater realism into his work than the atmospheric landscapes and interiors to which the Impressionists dedicated. It is with remarkable realism, for example, that Degas translates the delicate posture of his ballerina into bronze in his celebrated *La Petite danseuse de quatorze ans* (see fig. 1). The tulle skirt and silk corset, coupled with his unidealized representation of his lower class model, shocked contemporary audiences. As is felt in the present *Grande arabesque, troisième temps*, however, the naturalistic quality of his bronze ballerinas in large part stems from the modernity of the subject matter itself.

## 2 RENÉ MAGRITTE

1898 - 1967

### LES TROUBLES DU COEUR

signed *Magritte* (lower left); titled and dated 1943  
(on the reverse)

oil on canvas

21 3/4 by 29 1/2 in. 55.4 by 75 cm.

Executed in 1943.

\$ 2,500,000-3,500,000

#### PROVENANCE

Gilbert Sénécaut, Antwerp (acquired directly  
from the artist and until at least 1993)

Private Collection

Galerie Hopkins-Thomas-Custot, Paris

Acquired from the above in 2001 by the  
present owner

#### EXHIBITED

(possibly) Brussels, Galerie Lou Cosyn,

*Recent Pictures by Magritte*, 1943

(possibly) Brussels, Galerie Dietrich, *Exposition  
René Magritte*, 1944

#### LITERATURE

Paul Nougé, *René Magritte ou Les Images  
défendues*, Brussels, 1943, p. 61, illustrated  
René Magritte, *La Destination*, *Lettres à Marcel  
Mariën*, Brussels, 1977, postcard no. 47, letter  
no. 61, p. 64; letter no. 84, p. 87

Sarah Whitfield and Michael Raeburn; David  
Sylvester, ed., *René Magritte: Catalogue Raisonné,  
Oil Paintings and Objects, 1931-1948*, vol. II,  
London, 1993, no. 529, p. 315, illustrated  
David Sylvester, Sarah Whitfield and Michael  
Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné,  
Supplement, Exhibition Lists, Bibliography,  
Cumulative Index*, vol. V, London, 1997, p. 42







LEFT  
René Magritte in 1967.  
Photograph by  
Michael Cooper

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 1 Pierre-Auguste  
Renoir, *Bois de la  
Chaise* (Normanville),  
1895. The Barnes  
Foundation,  
Philadelphia



In his writing for the seminal 1924 *Surrealist Manifesto*, the movement's founder André Breton chose "the marvelous" (*le merveilleux*) as the term to describe the state of being and expression which the Surrealists exalted in both life and art. The electrifying essence of that marvelous quality is perhaps most viscerally felt in René Magritte's prolific body of work. His was a project characterized by a ceaseless pursuit of precisely that imagery which, through its brilliant contradiction of expectations, ruptures the viewer's continuous understanding of the world around them. In both style and subject, *Les Troubles du coeur* is a unique paradigm of that Surrealist subversion. In taking the reclining nude as his subject, and the painterly effect of Impressionism as his style, Magritte here not only plays with our perception of a canonical motif, but with the concept of 'the painting' itself.

A pinnacle of Magritte's "Impressionist" period, the choice of style for the present work is made all the more compelling when taken in the context of the history of Surrealism more broadly. The Surrealist

movement began around 1920 as a reaction against the devastation and destruction suffered during World War I—a conflict which the group believed to represent the failure of humanity and reason at the hand of politics and rational thought. The founding notion of a "surreality," conceived of as the resolution between the contradictory conditions of dream and reality, was meant to offer an alternative to the failures of our normative view of the world. Working nearly twenty years later in 1943, amidst a second World War of proportions inconceivable to those who endured the first one, Magritte felt that the aesthetics (though perhaps not the logic) of Surrealism fell short in their ability to convey his present emotions and the broader state of mind. As Magritte himself explained: "The disarray, the panic that Surrealism tried to create so as to call everything into question again, the Nazi cretins achieved that much better than we did, and there was no getting around it" (Letter from René Magritte to André Breton, 24 June 1946 quoted in Harry Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, New York, 1977, p. 187).



“A NEW STYLE CAN ATTEST ONLY TO AN INTEREST  
IN NEW FORMS, AND THIS ACCORDS ONLY WITH  
A FAMILIAR FEELING OF MYSTERY.”

— LETTER FROM RENÉ MAGRITTE TO ANDRÉ BOSMANS, 18 AUGUST 1959

It was at this moment, during the German occupation of his native Belgium, that Magritte turned to the techniques of the Impressionists. Adopting their verdant pastel palette and thick, painterly brushstrokes, Magritte embarked on what he called “Surrealism in full sunlight” (Letter from René Magritte to G. Puel, 8 March 1955 quoted in *ibid.*, p. 186). It was precisely this artistic pursuit of joy and pleasure which he now saw as the antidote to the pessimism brought on by the war. As he goes on to explain, during this period he attempted to join together what he deemed two mutually exclusive poles: “a feeling of levity, intoxication, happiness, which depends on a certain mood and on an atmosphere that certain Impressionists—or rather, Impressionism in general—have managed to render in painting,” and “a feeling of the mysterious existence of objects... which is experienced only by means of a certain clairvoyance” (*ibid.*). *Les Troubles du cœur* stands as perhaps one of the most radiant examples of the success he found within that nexus.

In the present work, Magritte adopts the Impressionist inflection with all of the artistic bravado he demonstrates in his characteristically careful

and matter-of-fact mode of address. Magritte here depicts the chimerical floral-nude with the immediacy of application and vibrancy of palette which became synonymous with the atmospheric, plein-air canvases of his Impressionist predecessors, particularly those of Renoir. Though he refuted a direct translation, the glimpse of landscape peaking through the velvet curtain at left bears a striking resemblance to the French artist’s picturesque seaside landscapes, with its glowing blue water and lush chromatism (see fig. 1). The burlesque setting of *Les Troubles du cœur* likewise calls to mind the newfound preoccupation with scenes of modern Parisian life which predominated in the canvases of those artists working in the two decades before the turn of the century. Beyond a technical similarity, however, Magritte’s deference to Renoir’s technique translates onto the present canvas the same quality of light and sensual intimacy which characterized so many of his floral and figural studies. The rich pink palette which washes over the entire composition lends an uncanny uniformity to the scene, and confers on every aspect of the interior a sense of coherence which makes the Surrealist transposition at center more unexpected.

ABOVE LEFT  
Fig. 2 Titian, *Venus of Urbino*, 1538, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 3 Édouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1865, Musée d’Orsay, Paris

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 4 Salvador Dalí, *After World Lips Sofa*, 2018, Museum Boijmans, Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Particularly at the point of transition between the figure’s legs and the flower, the brushstrokes work to lessen the visual dissonance between the two objects, and in turn heighten the uncanny resolution of their pairing.

Magritte’s choice of the perennial theme of the reclining nude likewise places the work within a prolific art historical lineage. Throughout both the modern and pre-modern canon, the motif had come to sublimate the female form with ideals of beauty, and her nudity with the projected desires of a specific aesthetic era. In her pose, the figure in *Les Troubles du cœur* draws a striking parallel to two of the most famous examples of the genre, Titian’s canonical *Venus of Urbino* and Édouard Manet’s 1863 portrait of the prostitute *Olympia* (see figs. 2 and 3). The floral motif abounds in both works, simultaneously representing the paradox of virginal purity and a brazen promiscuity. In these historical examples the flower therefore comes to represent the various inflections of the figures’ nudity. It is precisely this transposition—between a symbol of feminine sexuality and the woman herself—which Magritte expounds upon in the present work. The

woman here appears as if the flower, enticingly tucked behind Olympia’s ear or lightly held within Venus’ hand, had grown to overtake her figure. As such, the rose becomes a metonym for all that it replaces, as if to make explicit the transliteration of the symbol with its interpretation.

Magritte’s use of the flower as a metaphor or stand in for an explicit sexuality is complemented by his careful cropping of the reclining figure. The fragmentation of the female body, and subsequent assignation of a signifier to its parts, was a recurring tactic within the Surrealist lexicon (see fig. 4) and a prominent theme throughout Magritte’s oeuvre. In reducing his model to her improbably long, slender legs, one bent and the other outstretched, Magritte exaggerates and plays upon the sexual nature of her pose. The inclusion of the crystalline high heels draws attention to the state of her comparative undress, and in turn accentuates the salacious nature of her faceless anonymity. While Titian’s *Venus* and Manet’s *Olympia* are both depicted with a decisive sense of agency, meeting the viewer’s eyes with her frontal gaze, Magritte engenders a forced voyeurism





that is complicated by the censor of the flower. The discomfort, or perhaps pleasure he inspires is part and parcel with his broader Surrealist project of depicting an image type the way we imagine it rather than the way that it appears within our lived reality. The title *Les Troubles de coeur* perhaps speaks to the irreconcilable nature of the image to satisfy both desire and reason.

Magritte's subversion of the motif of the reclining nude is an extension of his lifelong fascination with "Objective Stimulus," a term he applied to those instances in which he replaced an object familiar to a particular context with one related to it, but out of place. When dissected into its component parts, no one aspect of *Les Troubles de coeur* is unfamiliar to the scene he creates: the rose, the nude, the lushly upholstered interior, and the sunlit landscape seen through the curtains all exist comfortably within their Impressionist rendering. And yet, in replacing the woman's torso and head with the rose, and removing any barrier between inside and out, Magritte proves the image to in fact be a playful defiance of our expectations.

There is perhaps the intimation that the retroactive use of the Impressionist style in the middle of the twentieth century was an "Objective Stimulus" itself. This aesthetic, which for so long had become synonymous with artistic convention, is here applied in a context which is utterly incongruent with its prevailing connotations. The adverse response of contemporary critics perhaps speaks to the very Surrealist dislocation which Magritte enacts, and which they derided these works for lacking. Magritte shows Impressionism—the quintessentially painterly style—to be merely a foil. He takes something which the public purports to know—a painting of flowers by Renoir, or Manet's *Olympia*—and presents it with all of the descriptive details necessary to uphold that association. And so, this artistic mimesis is in a way the ultimate Surrealist trick, wherein "Impressionism" itself becomes yet another of his uncanny motifs. As Suzi Gablik astutely points out, the reactionary move towards Impressionism in response to the war was Surrealist in and of itself: "The idea was, in a way, scandalous—if not terrible: at a moment when horror was rampant, there was a certain absurdity in trying to charm" (Suzi Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1985, p. 146).



"THE PLEASURE WE DERIVE FROM [THIS IMPRESSIONIST ATMOSPHERE] IS COMPLEX... BECAUSE TO BE ABLE TO APPRECIATE IT WE MUST ADMIT THAT OUR SEEING STOPS BETWEEN THE OBJECT VIEWED AND OURSELVES, WHICH IS FAR FROM EASY, AND WE MUST RENOUNCE THE STEREOTYPED IMAGES OF OBJECTS WITH WHICH INDIFFERENCE OR SPIRITUAL LAZINESS IS CONTENT."

- RENÉ MAGRITTE, *LA QUERELLE DU SOLEIL*, 1946

3  
FRANÇOIS-XAVIER  
LALANNE

1927 - 2008

"TROUPEAU D'ÉLÉPHANTS  
DANS LES ARBRES" TABLE

comprising seven free standing elephant sculptures  
and an octagonal center table  
the table and each elephant monogrammed FXL,  
impressed LALANNE, numbered 2/8 and  
dated 2001

gold patinated bronze and glass

table height: 33 1/4 in. 84.4 cm.  
table diameter: 67 in. 170.2 cm.  
largest elephant: 20 by 38 1/4 by 7 in. 50.8 by 46.4 by  
17.8 cm.

Executed in 2001, number 2 from an edition of 8 (of  
which only 5 are known)  
Executed by Denys-Jean Fondeur, Villers-sur-Port,  
France

PROVENANCE  
Commissioned directly from the artist through  
Peter Marra in 2001.  
\$ 4,000,000-6,000,000







"ANIMALS HAVE ALWAYS FASCINATED ME, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY ARE THE ONLY BEINGS THROUGH WHOM ONE CAN ENTER INTO ANOTHER WORLD. OTHERWISE ONE IS STUCK IN THE HUMAN WORLD, WHICH IS TO SAY IN ONE'S OWN IMAGE, LIKE A MAN CEASELESSLY PACING IN A HOUSE LINED WITH MIRRORS, FINDING NOTHING BUT HIS OWN REFLECTION."

— FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LALANNE

If there could be only one emblematic motif to unite the illustrious career of François-Xavier Lalanne, it would inevitably be the designer's never-ending enrapture with the world of animals. In speaking about the constant inspiration he found in their vastness, Lalanne remarked: "The animal world constitutes the richest and most varied source of forms on the planet. Furthermore, it provides a gigantic vocabulary of signs and metaphors. And do not forget that animals are man's oldest companions" (quoted in Adrian Danerff, *Les Lalanne: Fifty Years of Work*, exh. cat., New York, Paul Kasmin Gallery, Les Lalanne, 2015, p. 60). Lalanne wished to escape into the animal world, to bring their unending mystery and intrigue into the lives of the humans he found himself surrounded by. Lalanne's *Troupeau of Elephants dans les Arbres* Table, bridging the familiar and the fantastical, the functional and the sculptural, and the fine and the decorative art, immediately evokes the very best of Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne's "Zooptiles," both the name of the husband-and-wife duo Les Lalanne's first joint exhibition in Paris in June 1964 and an obsolete French term referring to creatures that seem to bridge the gap between the natural and the animal world. The octagonal table, accompanied by seven free-standing elephants that, in many configurations, seem to march amongst

each other as a herd under the trees, thoroughly encapsulates the simultaneously functional and whimsical world that was espoused by Lalanne for the entirety of his career.

One of the most prolific Surrealists of the 20th and 21st centuries, Lalanne courted himself as a contemporary of some of the most important artists of the 20th century avant-garde. His immediate peers included the likes of Constantin Brâncuși, Man Ray, Max Ernst, and Marcel Duchamp, all of whom had a sizable influence on the Surrealist tendencies of his peerless forays into sculpture and design. Lalanne's practice was similarly influenced by his time working as a security guard at the Louvre, where he familiarized himself with ancient animals and mythologies throughout the Egyptian and Assyrian wings, beginning an early interest in the animal kingdom. His fascination with the lives of animals evolved into his sculptural forms, imbuing a Surrealist touch by transforming these creatures into everyday objects. From baboon tripieces, sheep-seats, rhinoceros desks, to hippopotamus bathtubs, the fantastical—and the seemingly impossible—was always within reach for Lalanne.

The present table, consisting of a herd of size-varying gilded elephants that seem to gather together under the protection of Acacia trees in

the African savanna, could almost be passed over for its functional use as a table by its immediate enchantment as a sculpture. The gilt legs of the table, fashioned into trees that gradually twist upwards into organic offshoots and branches, hold above them the octagonal glass top that protects the elephants below. Each one of the seven free-standing elephants can be moved into any configuration desired by its owner, whether they be around the table or even on top of it, resulting in a sculpture that can only best be activated through human engagement, a frequent trick of Lalanne's. Once placed into a static position, the elephants exude a kind of stillness that Lalanne described aptly: "No creature on earth has so great an aptitude for stillness as a wild animal. Its stillness so absolute that in its natural environment, it can become invisible...they have remained, as it were, in the state of paradise, which is to say in the state of nature" (ibid., p. 60). It is only fitting, then, that so much of Lalanne's practice revolves around disrupting this very stillness, with works that constantly invite the active interaction of the human.





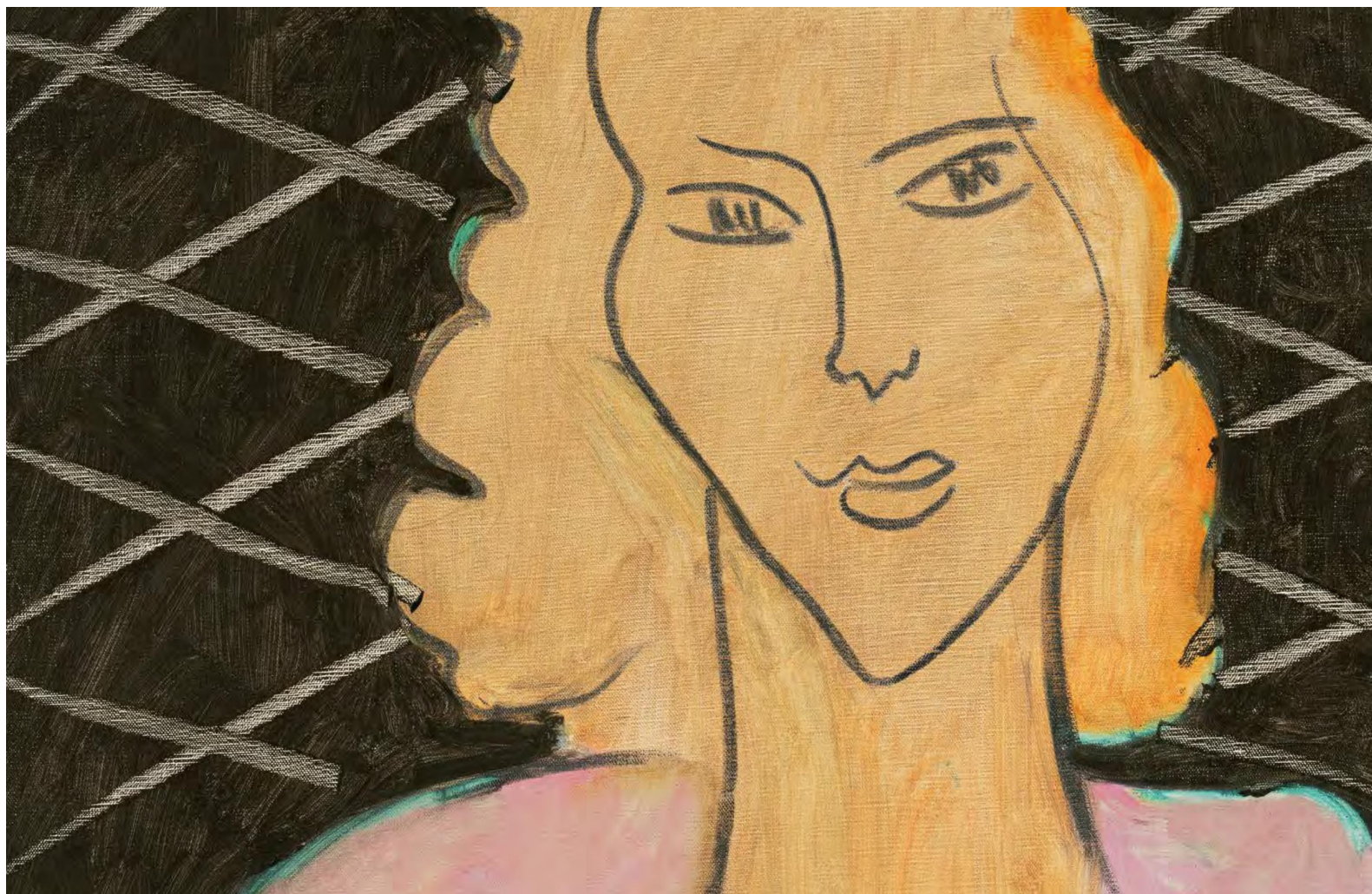
The animals of the savanna figured strongly into Lalanne's world throughout his career, especially as it was with his much-celebrated "*Rhinocrétaire I*" that he began his foray into the world of sculpture. Lalanne's interest in their large size, something he could manipulate in his own designs, is reflected in his writings about his creative process: "I remembered that moment of peace, when large animals, in the vastness of the savanna, are profiles on the line of the horizon, all heading towards the watering hole" (*ibid.*, p. 61). The largest mammal in the animal kingdom, the elephant might immediately seem to be on a scale impossible to reproduce

in sculpture. Lalanne's whimsical impulse rejects this idea, instead reproducing the animal in seven different sizes, ranging from the miniature to the slightly-larger than handheld. From large topiaries, fountains, andirons, bowls, and candlesticks, the elephant has presented itself as an endless source of fascination for Lalanne, and finds one of its most beguiling forms in the present table, its form being replicated over and over. An incredibly small number of examples of this model are known to exist, making the present model an especially unique opportunity to acquire a true masterwork by the great pioneer of 20th century design.









4

## HENRI MATISSE

1869 - 1954

### JEUNE FILLE EN ROBE ROSE

signed *Henri Matisse* and dated 10/42 (upper left)

oil on canvas

21 1/4 by 18 1/4 in. 55.1 by 46 cm.

Executed in Nice in October 1942.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Georges Matisse.

\$ 3,000,000-5,000,000

#### PROVENANCE

Martin Fabiani, Paris (acquired by 1943)  
Galerie Schmit, Paris (acquired by 1974 and until at least 1979)  
Waddington Galleries, London  
Private Collection, Switzerland (acquired by 1987)  
Gasiunasen Gallery, Palm Beach  
Acquired from the above in 1998 by the present owner

#### EXHIBITED

London, Victoria and Albert Museum; Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum and Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Exhibition of Paintings by Picasso and Matisse, 1945-46*, no. 30 (London and Amsterdam); no. 20, n.p., illustrated (Brussels; illustrated as no. 21) (titled *Jeune fille*)  
Paris, Galerie Schmit, *Portraits français, XIXe et XXe siècles*, 1974, pl. 35, illustrated in color (titled *Femme en rose* and with incorrect inscription)  
Paris, Galerie Schmit, *Maîtres français, XIXe et du XXe siècles*, 1979, no. 47

#### LITERATURE

Les Éditions du Chêne, ed., *Matisse, Seize Peintures 1939-1943*, Paris, 1943, pl. XII, illustrated in color (titled *La Dame au corsage rose*)  
Christian Zervos, ed., *Cahiers d'Art, 1940-44*, Paris, 1944, p. 135, illustrated  
Louis Aragon, *Henri Matisse: a novel*, vol. I, New York, 1972, p. 137, illustrated (in a photograph of the artist's studio)  
Lydia Delectorskaya, *Henri Matisse: Contre vents et marées, Peintures et livres illustrés de 1939 à 1943*, Paris, 1996, p. 408, illustrated in color; p. 551 (titled *Tête ocre, fond losange* and dated 6 October 1942)  
Hilary Spurling, *Matisse the Master. A Life of Henri Matisse: The Conquest of Colour, 1909-1954*, New York, 2005, p. 387, illustrated (in a photograph of the artist's studio)





In late summer of 1942, Henri Matisse approached his easel with a novel artistic invigoration. At last surmounting the effects of a major, risk-laden surgery in January 1941, the seventy-one year-old master completed in the following months a prodigious body of canvases that brim with the unabashed ebullience of being afforded what he declared a "second life" (Letter from the artist to Albert Marquet, 16 January 1942, reprinted in Exh. Cat., Saint Louis Art Museum, *Henri Matisse: Paper Cut-Outs*, 1977, p. 43). Executed in October 1942, *Jeune fille en robe rose* is a paean to Matisse's ceaseless creative determination and a herald of the artist's late oeuvre.

World War II found Matisse ensconced in the sanctuary of his grand home and studio at the Hôtel Régina in Cimiez, Nice, where he remained steadfastly committed to his art despite the city's occupation

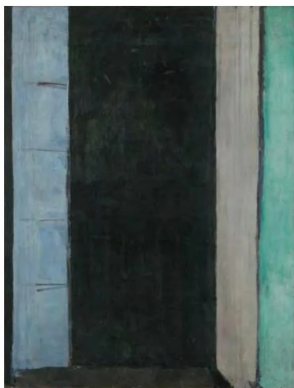
by the Vichy regime and threats of displacement. "In order to prevent an avalanche overwhelming me," Matisse wrote to his daughter, Marguerite Duthuit, as France fell to Germany in June of 1940, "I'm trying to distract myself from it as far as possible by clinging to the idea of the future work I could still do, if I don't let myself be destroyed" (quoted in Hilary Spurling, *Matisse the Master, A Life of Henri Matisse: The Conquest of Colour, 1909-1954*, New York, 2005, p. 393). Eschewing any reference to the outside world, intimate still lifes and female portraits reflected his light-suffused and theatrically-ornamented lodgings, offering a salve of beauty and hope amidst the turmoil of his homeland.

Bolstered by the artist's miraculous recovery from his early 1941 surgery, the artist's determination was channeled into a newfound dedication to drawing, a central pillar of his oeuvre. Matisse's year and a half-

BELOW LEFT  
Fig. 1 Henri Matisse,  
*Laurette sur fond noir*,  
robe verte, 1946,  
The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art,  
New York

BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Henri Matisse,  
*Porte blanche à  
Collioure*, 1934,  
Centre Pompidou, Paris

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 3 Henri Matisse at  
Villa Le Rivet, Venice,  
circa 1943-44,  
Photograph by Henri  
Cartier-Bresson



"WHAT I DID BEFORE THIS ILLNESS, BEFORE THIS OPERATION ALWAYS HAS THE FEELING OF TOO MUCH EFFORT; BEFORE THIS, I ALWAYS LIVED WITH MY BELT TIGHTENED. WHAT I CREATED AFTERWARDS REPRESENTS ME MYSELF: FREE AND DETACHED."

- HENRI MATISSE QUOTED IN GOTTHARD JEDLIKA, *DIE MATISSE KAPELLE IN VENCE*, FRANKFURT, 1955

long convalescence spurred hundreds of drawings replete with an exultant spontaneity and lyrical purity of line. Struggling for decades to reconcile the stylistic disparity between his paintings and drawings, a conflict that he perceived as inhibiting his ability to achieve full painterly expression, he resolved to now manifest the liberation achieved in his drawings within his paintings. The artist proclaimed to his son Pierre in April 1942, "For the last year I have made an enormous effort in drawing. What I've produced has been like a *floraison* (flowering) after fifty years of

efforts. I need to do the same in painting" (quoted in Pierre Schneider, *Matisse*, London, 1984, p. 648).

*Jeune fille en robe rose* fully deploys this gestural freedom, proclaiming the radical transformation of Matisse's painting practice. The studio wall and the sitter are compressed to a unified, bi-dimensional plane, both distilled to their essence of color and line. Enclosed by emphatic contours, the flattened expanses of the sitter's costume and skin form sites for a joyous interplay of pigment, with riotous ochres and pinks emboldened by intermittent



glimpses of aquamarine and orange. Matisse here revels in the expressive powers of color as a discrete compositional entity, affirming Pierre's Schneider's declaration that: "What the 1941 operation gave birth to was color. Color would now give itself over unreservedly to its potential, just as drawing had earlier surrendered to its potential" (Pierre Schneider, *Matisse*, London, 1984, p. 650). The self-assured gaze of the sitter, Monette Vincent, coupled with the vigorous physicality of Matisse's figuration, is an emphatic declaration of the artist's renewed painterly confidence and vitality.

While *Jeune fille en robe rose* is a marked departure from the ornamented interiors of Matisse's earlier Nice portraits, the lozenge-patterned backdrop nonetheless evokes the myriad Kuba textiles of the

Congo that adorned the artist's residence (see fig. 3). Its incised white diagonals endow the pictorial surface with simultaneous structure and dynamism; the surrounding black, paradoxically, functions to produce light in the absence of an exterior light source. Expounding on this effect, Matisse stated, "Black is a color which does not need to only indicate shadowing and darkness; all depends on the relationships given it. It can play the same part as white in a luminous color harmony" (Henri Matisse, note, 22 September 1946, reprinted in Pierre Schneider, *Matisse*, London, 1984, p. 492) and in 1946 declared in the magazine *Derrière le miroir*, "Black is a force: I depend on black to simplify the construction" (Jack Flam, ed., *Matisse on Art*, Berkeley, 1995, p. 106). Black, in its stark tonal contrast, enhances the vibrancy of the sitter's

ABOVE  
Henri Matisse,  
*Le Closer, Maquette  
pour planche I*  
8th Jan. 1943,  
Centre Pompidou, Paris

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 4 The present  
work is Henri Matisse's  
studio at the Hôtel  
Régence, Nice, 1942.  
Photograph by Hélène  
Aubert

"IT HAD TAKEN ME ALL THIS TIME TO REACH A STAGE WHERE I CAN SAY WHAT I WANT TO SAY."

— HENRI MATISSE QUOTED IN "WHAT I WANT TO SAY," *TIME*, VOL. LIV, NO. 17, 14 OCTOBER 1949, P. 70

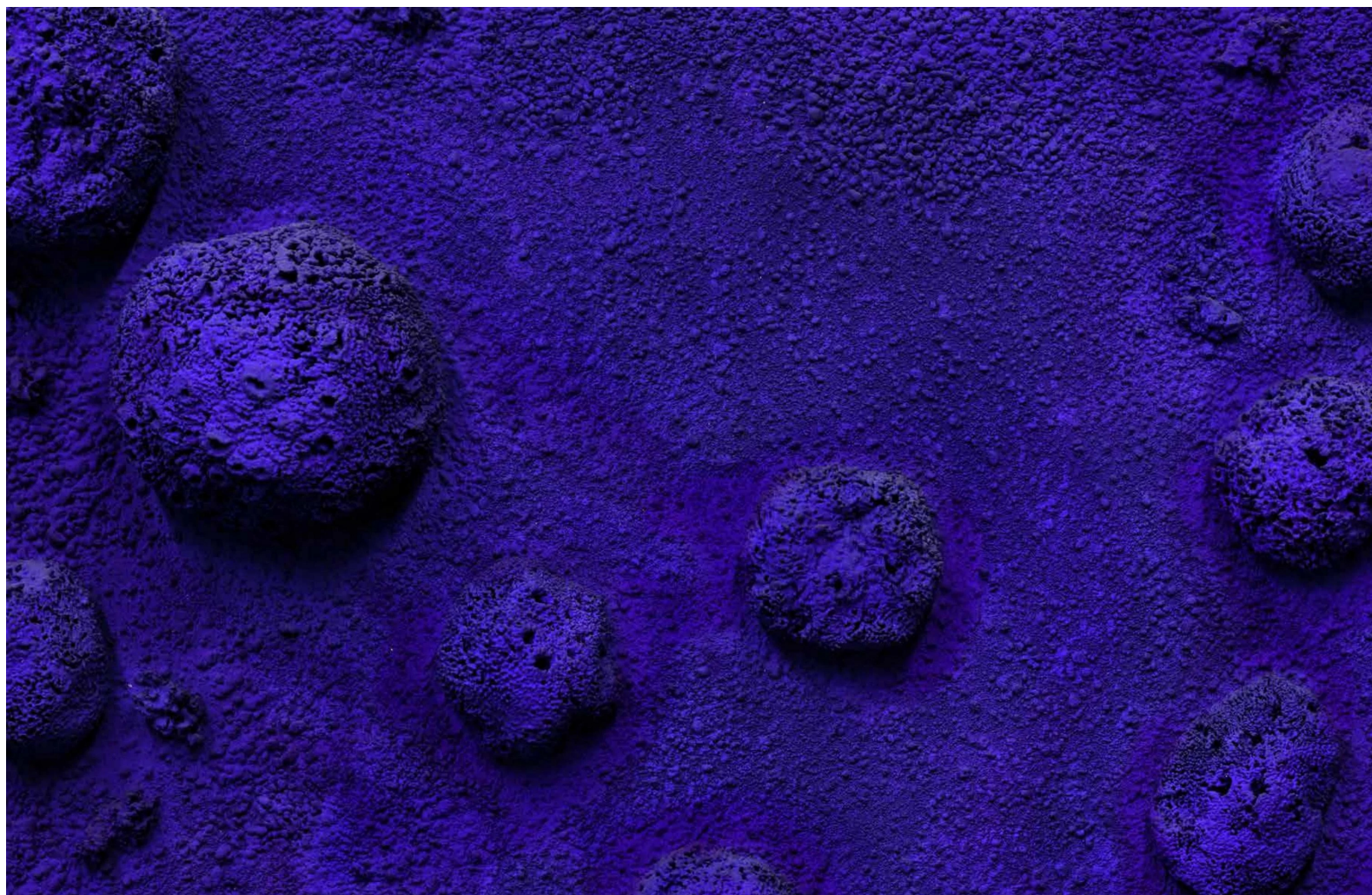
chromatic hues and imparts her with an internal luminosity. Evoking the tenebrous backgrounds of his forerunner, Édouard Manet, Matisse masterfully re-engages with a compositional device wielded to radical effect in such celebrated paintings as *Porte-fenêtre à Collioure* and his Tangiers paintings of 1912-13 (see figs. 2 and 3).

*Jeune fille en robe rose* stands among Matisse's last accomplishments of his nearly thirty-year Nice period, before threats of bombardment in June 1943 obliged him to evacuate the city. At Villa Le Réve in

nearby Vence (see fig. 3), the distilled figuration of the present work would be deployed in full force with his complete dedication to paper cut-outs (see fig. 4). *Jeune fille en robe rose* is a triumph of Matisse's indefatigable artistic ambition. "It may seem that joy radiates from my work more than in the past, but this is exactly what I tried to do fifty years ago," the artist concluded. "It had taken me all this time to reach a stage where I can say what I want to say" (quoted in "What I Want to Say," *Time*, vol. LIV, no. 17, 14 October 1949, p. 70).







YVES KLEIN

1928 - 1962

RELIEF ÉPONGE BLEU  
SANS TITRE, (RE 28)

signed with the artist's initials YK (on the reverse)  
dry pigment and synthetic resin, natural sponges  
and pebbles on panel  
31 by 50 1/4 by 78 7/8 by 128 cm  
Executed in 1961

\$ 8,000,000-12,000,000

PROVENANCE

Michel Costantini & Cie., Paris  
Pierre and Marianne Nahon, Paris  
Private Collection, Switzerland  
Acquavella Galleries, New York (acquired from the  
above in 2000)  
Acquired from the above in 2001 by the present  
owner

EXHIBITED

Vence, Galerie Bleaubourg, *La modernité  
après 1958—les Nouveaux Réalistes*, 1997

LITERATURE

Paul Wember, *Yves Klein*, Cologne, 1969, no. RE  
28, p. 82, illustrated (with incorrect orientation)  
Exh. Cat., New York, L&M Arts, *Yves Klein: A Career  
Survey*, 2005, p. 68, illustrated (with the artist in  
process on the beach in Malibu, June 1961)  
Röhrich Klein-Mosquay and Robert Pross-Witten,  
*Yves Klein USA*, Paris, 2009, p. 137, illustrated  
in color; pp. 138-39, illustrated (with the artist in  
process on the beach in Malibu, June 1961), p. 201  
Pierre Nahon, *L'histoire de la Galerie Bleaubourg  
II, 1964-2009*, Paris, 2009, p. 42, illustrated in  
color (in situ); pp. 110-11, illustrated in color (in  
installation with incorrect orientation at FIAC),  
p. 161, illustrated in color (in installation with  
incorrect orientation at FIAC)

Exh. Cat., Washington, D.C., Hirshhorn Museum  
and Sculpture Garden (and traveling), *Yves Klein:  
With the Void, Full Powers*, 2003, p. 290, illustrated  
(with the artist in process on the beach in Malibu,  
June 1961)

Exh. Cat., Washington, D.C., National Gallery of  
Art (and traveling), *Los Angeles to New York: Dean  
Gallery, 1959-1971*, 2006, p. 41; p. 243, illustrated  
(with the artist in process on the beach in Malibu,  
June 1961)

Matthias Koddorberg, *Yves Klein—In-Out*,  
Darmstadt, 2006, pp. 234-35, illustrated in color;  
p. 402

Exh. Cat., Aix-en-Provence, Hôtel de Caumont,  
*Centre d'Art*, Yves Klein, Istres, 2002, pp. 80-81,  
illustrated (with the artist and Robert Liecker in  
process on the beach in Malibu, June 1961)

Yves Klein Archives, Paris, ongoing, no. RE 28,  
illustrated in color; illustrated (with the artist in  
process on the beach in Malibu, June 1961);  
illustrated (with the artist and Robert Liecker  
in process on the beach in Malibu, June 1961)  
(online)

YVES KLEIN  
YVES KLEIN WITH LOUISINE  
BLAU (Orange Head)  
at the Galerie Nahon  
Opera and Theatre  
Galerie Nahon  
Germany







Completed at the height of Yves Klein's brief but paradigm-shifting career, *Relief Éponge bleu sans titre* (RE 28) is exemplary of the intersection of the philosophies and spirituality which informed Klein's artistic output. Klein's sponge reliefs represent the culmination of the artist's early practice. They represent the artist's years of discipline through practicing judo, inspiration drawn from the artists that most inspired him and his emphatic determination to differentiate his art from anything that had been done before. From this carefully intentional trajectory, Klein's first breakthrough came with the innovation of his blue monochromes, further making his mark through the sponge. RE 28 is an otherworldly icon of Klein's defiance of the existing boundaries of abstraction and his revolutionary pursuit of replicating the unique beauty of the natural world.

Resplendent and mystical in its nature, RE 28 reveals Klein's unceasing fascination with the natural world and his desire to channel its beauty through his

work. Klein's mastery over varied texture is evidenced in the combination of velvety pigment mixed with resin, irregular pebbles and masses of organic sponge, creating a composition reminiscent of the surface of the moon or the deep ocean floor. Within this dreamlike, alien landscape, light and shadow move across each peak, crevice and pore, emphasizing the tonal variation inherent to the color which Klein had initially chosen for its pure radiance. The terrain of RE 28 bathed in the surreal blue presents a foreign landscape devoid of colors that occur in nature. Yet, RE 28 is so entrancing in its purity and depth that one forgets that it is not an artifact of nature—revealing the mark of Klein's brilliance.

As early as 1956, Klein used sponges during his experiments with his blue monochromes and was thrilled with the totality of the organic material's absorption of color. Klein created his first blue sponge sculpture in 1957 and contemporaneously incorporated the material into his plans for

WIKIA  
Fig. 1. Barnett Newman,  
Cathedral, 1950.  
Owens Corning Fiberglas  
Foundation

WIKIA  
Fig. 2. Yves Klein,  
Relief Éponge Bleu (Sponge  
Relief and monochrome blue  
monochrome, 2007-15)  
Galerie Iris Clert, Paris  
and Theater  
Gelsenkirchen, Germany

the Gelsenkirchen theater project, a group of monumental murals commissioned as part of an effort to revitalize an urban complex and opera house destroyed during the Second World War (see Fig. 2). At that point in his career Klein had not yet completed anything on such a grand scale. By late 1957, Klein designed and submitted models of two large-scale monochrome murals with modulated, rippled surfaces of plaster, giving them the effect of the ocean surface or floor or the topography of a windswept blue desert. With a need for a more spatially dynamic complement to the low-relief monochromes, Klein envisioned several large-scale sponge reliefs—expanding his monochromes into three-dimensional space and merging his singular, sculptural sponges with the painted surface to create an engulfing, seemingly living relief. Sponges were also affixed to the walls beyond the edges of the paintings to suggest the propagation of an ultramarine organism. Klein fought for his design and for the commission's approval to allow his entire installation to be painted in a stabilized version of what had become his characteristic International Klein Blue (IKB). Gelsenkirchen thus served as the

catalyst for what would become one of the most significant series of Klein's career.

In a coordinated effort to promote the Gelsenkirchen commission in June 1959, Klein chose to present an exhibition of the sponge sculptures at Galerie Iris Clert in Paris. Titled *La forêt d'éponges et les bas-reliefs monochromes*, the show included an array of Klein's singular sponge sculptures, positioned at varying heights throughout the gallery commensurate with sponge-reliefs of different sizes hung on the gallery walls. Klein expressed that the sponges signified the saturation of his ideal transferred from his work to viewers; he anthropomorphized the freestanding sponges as figures, portraits, or "readers" bearing witness to the monochrome reliefs. The sponges were fully imbued with ultramarine blue and with the impression of experiencing Klein's philosophy: that his art was the experience of color which went beyond mere spectatorship of two- and three-dimensional objects.

In one sense, Klein's future of the sponges to the painted surface was an assemblage of the means of his artistic process: rather than showing his hand through painted gesture, the sponges are artifacts of











Klein's methodology becoming the art object itself. Throughout his career, Klein's artistic sensibility was defined by his pursuit of the immaterial, by his desire to be both within and throughout his work in a spiritual sense (which he consistently referred to abstractly as 'impregnation'), and his simultaneous desire to distance himself from his work in the sense of mark-making and representation. Klein continued to make the sponge reliefs from their momentous inception with the Gelsenkirchen commission and the Iris Clert exhibition of 1959 and gained international recognition from the public praise following the opening of Gelsenkirchen. European fervor continued to surround his dramatic defiance of traditional painting, notably with the public reaction to his *Anthropométrie* paintings and the performances which conceived them, as well as with his theatrical *Leap into the Void*. With increased exposure in Europe came opportunities to exhibit abroad, including a poorly reviewed inaugural American show at Castelli

Gallery, New York, in early 1961. His disappointment was soon buoyed by a warmer reception in Los Angeles. In May of 1961, gallerist Virginia Dwan opened Klein's first Los Angeles exhibition with several blue monochromes, *Anthropométries* and sponge reliefs on display. In the artist's moment of American acceptance and his first exposure to the bucolic coastal lifestyle of California in the early 60s, Klein created *RE 28* on the sunny beaches of Malibu in front of Dwan's home. In images of Klein utilizing the seaside as his studio, the artist worked closest to the natural environment which best inspired his sponge reliefs (see figs. 3 and 6). This act could be considered to bring the artist's impassioned all-encompassing ethos of experience and sensibility, at least in the process of creation, full circle.

After completing his studies in 1948, Klein's focus ranged from studying and practicing judo to spending time with friends—including the fellow budding artist Arman—in Nice, where he had lived intermittently

PREVIOUS  
Fig. 3 Yves Klein with Robert Klein-Mogway making the present work on Malibu Beach, California, 1961

ABOVE  
Fig. 4 Lucio Fontana, *Concetto Spaziale, La Fine di Dio*, 1963. Private Collection. Sold: Sotheby's, London, 15 October 2005, lot 17 for \$24.7 million

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 5 Vincent van Gogh, *Bois avec un cyprès et une église*, 1890. Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo

"...WE ABSOLUTELY MUST REALIZE—AND THIS IS NO EXAGGERATION—THAT WE ARE LIVING IN THE ATOMIC AGE, WHERE ALL PHYSICAL MATTER CAN VANISH FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT TO SURRENDER ITS PLACE TO WHAT WE CAN ENVISION AS THE MOST ABSTRACT. I BELIEVE THAT FOR THE PAINTER THERE EXISTS A SENSUOUS AND COLORED MATTER THAT IS INTANGIBLE...IT IS NO LONGER A QUESTION OF SEEING COLOR BUT RATHER OF 'PERCEIVING' IT."

— YVES KLEIN QUOTED IN KLAUS OTTMANN, ED., *OVERCOMING THE PROBLEMATICS OF ART: THE WRITINGS OF YVES KLEIN*, PARIS, 2007, PP. 20-21

throughout his childhood. At the age of twenty in 1948, beneath the skies above the beaches of Nice, Klein made a declaration which would prove to be an early kernel of the overarching ideals of his career. Gesturing as if to mark the sky with his signature, Klein claimed the blue expanse as his "first and greatest monochrome" (quoted in Klaus Ottmann, ed., *Yves Klein: Works and Writings*, Barcelona, 2010, p. 24). In the years following this proclamation, Klein would lay the foundations for the philosophies from which his output would flow. Klein pursued his determination to master the art of judo by traveling to Japan and practicing at the Kodokan Judo Institute in Tokyo, an endeavor which would inform his awareness of and nurture his lifelong fascination with elemental energy, space, and the practiced bodily and spiritual use of both. Following his return to Paris and several years of experimentation, Klein's first breakthrough precipitated what he cheekily declared as his 'Blue Period', or the first display of his blue monochromes, inaugurated in 1957 with his exhibition at Galleria Apollinaire in Milan. For the show, Klein displayed ten identical blue monochromes in the pigment which he developed and coined International Klein Blue. On his decision to present ten paintings of the same color Klein asserted:





Fig. 6 Yves Klein  
making the pigment  
work, Studio, La Jolla,  
California, 1961



"...We absolutely must realize—and this is no exaggeration—that we are living in the atomic age, where all physical matter can vanish from one day to the next to surrender to place to what we can envision as the most abstract. I believe that for the painter there exists a sensuous and colored matter that is intangible. It is no longer a question of seeing color but rather of 'perceiving' it" (Yves Klein quoted in Klaus Ottmann, ed., *Overcoming the Problematics of Art: The Writings of Yves Klein*, Paris, 2007, pp. 20-21).

Klein had arrived at the determination that the blue monochrome fulfilled his highest ideals in part through his conclusion that it distilled the paragons of the masters who preceded him. Klein was particular in his writings to name the sources of his inspiration and envisioned himself as a disciple of Delacroix for his call for the "liberty of art", and of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists who used color to achieve such liberty. In his impassioned argument for his drive to carry the torch of Van Gogh, Klein wrote, "...in front of any painting, figurative or non-figurative, I felt more and more that the lines and all their consequences, the contours, the forms,

the perspectives, the compositions, became exactly like the bars on the window of a prison. Far away, amidst color, dwell life and liberty. And in front of the picture I felt imprisoned, and I believe it is because of that same feeling of imprisonment that Van Gogh exclaimed, 'I long to be freed from I know now what horrible cage!'" (ibid., p. 19; see fig. 5).

Klein's artistic spirit burned bright and fast and while his life was extinguished far too soon, the works he left behind are testament to a genius that perceived color and refined its sublime power in a way that others have not since. Directly comparable to sponge reliefs now housed in such esteemed collections as the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Moderna Museet, Stockholm; The Menil Collection, Houston; Museum Ludwig, Cologne and Glenstone in Potomac, Maryland, *RE 28* is one of the most compelling examples from the series and has remained in the Spjel Miller Collection for more than 20 years. *RE 28* represents Klein's career-long translation of his ideals through artistic means in a monochromatic visual language unlike any other.



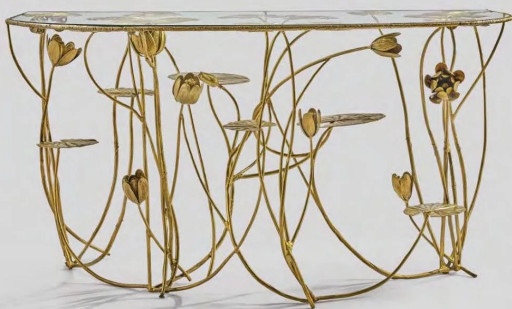


6  
CLAUDE LALANNE  
1925 - 2019

A UNIQUE "NÉNUPHARS"  
CONSOLE

offered en suite with lot 7  
numbered & 1/18; monogrammed CL, impressed  
LALANNE and dated 2002  
gilt patinated bronze and glass  
33 1/4 by 63 by 29 1/4 in.  
85.7 by 160 by 74.5 cm

Executed in 2002, number 24 from an edition of 1.  
PROVENANCE  
Commissioned directly from the artist through  
Pierrel Maréchal, 2002.  
\$ 1,500,000-2,000,000



7  
CLAUDE LALANNE  
1925 - 2019

A UNIQUE "NÉNUPHARS"  
CONSOLE

offered en suite with lot 6  
numbered & 1/18; monogrammed CL,  
impressed LALANNE and dated 2002  
gilt patinated bronze and glass  
33 1/4 by 63 by 29 1/4 in.  
85.7 by 160 by 74.5 cm

Executed in 2002, number 28 from an edition of 1.  
PROVENANCE  
Commissioned directly from the artist through  
Pierrel Maréchal, 2002.  
\$ 1,500,000-2,000,000





Claude Lorraine's two unique "Néophar" Console Tables, centerpieces of Sybil Miller's collection, stand as a testament to the artist's career-long pursuit of finding the poetic in the functional, the beautiful in the whimsical, and the extraordinary in the everyday, transforming her daily surroundings into a world of art. While Lorraine's partner François-Xavier found inspiration in the animal kingdom, Claude took hers from the flora of her surroundings — often from her own garden, or the lush greenery around her home in Ury, France. Claude took these elements — a water lily, an apple, a cabbage patch, a Ginkgo leaf, or a sinuous branch — and wholly transformed them, turning organic matter into a kind of functional sculpture entirely unique to Les Lalanne. The present consoles, as subtle as they are intricate, and as delicate as they are grand, thoroughly capture the visionary eye of their patron. Not only do they serve as a through line of some of the most celebrated works in Miller's collection, they capture her insistence on finding beauty in every object in her home, from the paintings on her walls to the consoles that held her everyday flowers.

Consisting of gilt bronze holding a glass top, the present two consoles capture Claude Lorraine's imaginative use of the natural world in everyday objects. Their viny, converging branches capture the "Néophar" or water lily, at every stage of its life — from the small, barely sprouted buds at the bottom of the console, to the blossoming water lilies, to the lily pads that seem to stretch upward into another dimension, flattening out at the top to hold the weight of the tabletop above. In the collection of

Sybil Miller since their creation in 2002, the present two works have sat in dialogue with her collector's masterpiece, Claude Monet's *Nymphéas*, echoing the same sort of beauty that Monet found in Giverny some 90 years before.

Unlike François-Xavier, who so meticulously calculated all of his designs in advance, Claude would improvise, seeking inspiration from the objects she found around her in her studio, or those that she could readily find on her walks. "When I begin, I never know what I am going to do," Unlike François, who often starts his projects with a drawing, I don't draw. Or my 'drawing' is in three dimensions, using thin copper wires for the maquette" (A. Danvatt, François-Xavier & Claude Lorraine: *In the domain of dreams*, 2018, p. 57). In this sense, Claude most fully relates to her Surrealist peers in her insistence on improvisation and automatism, constantly adding onto and modifying her works in an alchemical attempt at reaching some sort of unified whole. Lorraine's "Néophar" consoles reflect this impulse to create on a whim, their raw, winding branch legs twisted in every possible variation by Claude's own hands.

Much of Les Lalanne's career can be traced back to their time at the Impasse Ronsin, a small artists' colony in postwar Montmartre, Paris, that included a veritable who's who of the twentieth-century canon, including the likes of Max Ernst, Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely, and Constantin Brâncuși. It was there that Claude pooled funds with Tinguely and another artist friend, James Melcat, and learned the hallmarks of her later career in metal experimentation. Claude was early on fascinated by the malleability of the







"IT'S NOT A SUCCESS UNTIL I FIND IT BEAUTIFUL,  
WHICH IN FACT HAPPENS RARELY, AND ALL  
AT ONCE. EITHER IT'S THERE, OR IT'S NOTHING.  
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY."

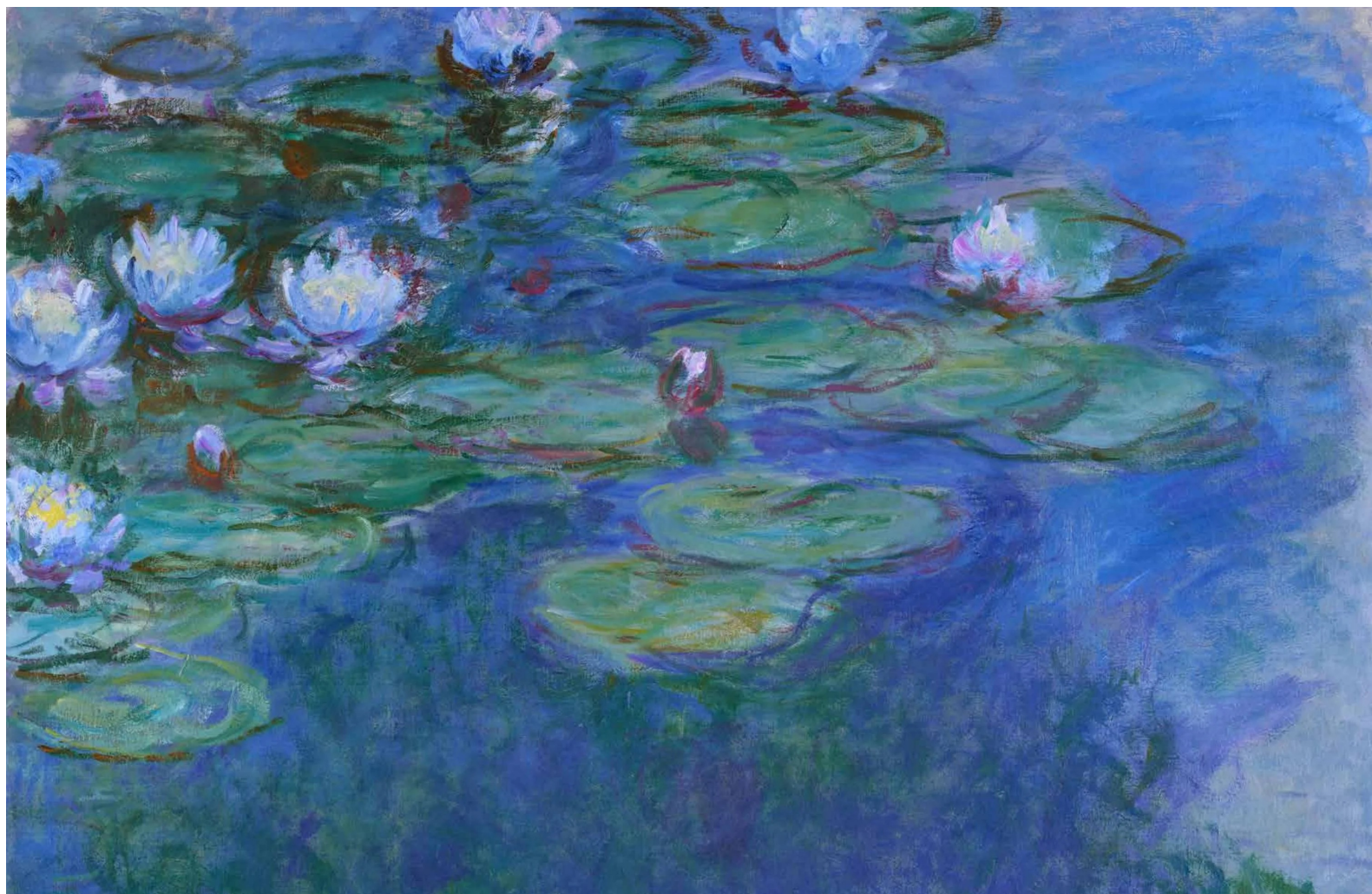
— CLAUDE LALANNE

material, remarking that "when we began to work metal, I was very surprised...you can saw it, melt it, bend it, form and deform it, which is really wonderful, even if it is rather hard" (A. Dannatt, *François -Xavier & Claude Lalanne : in the domain of dreams*, 2018, p. 57). Claude soon became a master of the old-fashioned craft of galvanoplasty, or electroplating, wherein one submerges an object in an electric-current bath in order to coat, or galvanize it, in a metal. Claude saw in the technique a chance to whimsically insert reality into her world of art, wrapping real plants in a fake, shimmering skin. It was after this point, though, that Claude most fully embraced the medium, combining various components together and reworking what came out of her baths by manipulating them even further, creating works of sculpture that were unmistakably hers, imbued with surreal combinations and moments of poetry. The present consoles capture this insistence on morphing reality into something almost surreal, with its intricately detailed, impossibly light lily pad leaves holding the sturdy tabletop above.

Throughout their career, Les Lalanne straddled the lines of their various classifications, never being truly seen as either artists nor as designers often because of the simple fact that their creations were deemed too useful to be art. As Claude remarked, "We have a lot of trouble because we made useful things and made them ourselves. This is automatically considered as

so called 'decorative arts,' a lesser, secondary art" (A. Dannatt, *François -Xavier & Claude Lalanne : in the domain of dreams*, 2018, p. 23). Because they sought to create functional things, and even more so because they created them themselves, as true masters of their craft, they were seen as artisans rather than artists, as makers rather than sculptors. Les Lalanne both thought of themselves as sculptors, but refused to make the kinds of sculpture of their peers that did "nothing but sit there and wait to be admired." Their works are meant to be used, and used they were in the collection of Sydel Miller, who placed the two present consoles prominently in her home, holding vases of flowers and other arrangements. Miller, like Les Lalanne, considered design to be on the same plane as art, and situated the two in dialogue throughout her collection and home—it is no coincidence that Monet's masterpiece *Nymphéas* features the same lily pads that Lalanne so delicately fashioned into the present console, nor that the other works on her walls were so often intentionally framed by the design around them. True masterpieces of form and function, Lalanne's two unique "*Nénuphar*" Console Tables present an entirely singular opportunity to acquire works that have long figured as centerpieces of the inimitable collection of Sydel Miller, where they were seen as not only vessels to place other objects, but as works of art in and of themselves.





## 8 CLAUDE MONET

1840 - 1926

### NYMPHÉAS

stamped with the signature *Claude Monet* (on the reverse), and stamped again (on the stretcher)  
oil on canvas

68 7/8 by 53 1/4 in. 175 by 135.4 cm.

Executed circa 1914-17.

Estimate Upon Request

#### PROVENANCE

Michel Monet, Giverny (acquired by descent directly from the artist)  
Heinrich Wasseermann, Basel (acquired from the above on 28 September 1949)  
Dr. Walter S. Schiess, Basel (acquired before 1957)  
Private Collection, Switzerland (acquired by descent from the above and until at least 1992)  
Acquired in 2001 by the present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Kunsthalle Basel, *Impressionisten. Monet. Pissarro. Sisley. Vorläufer und Zeitgenossen*, 1949, no. 213, illustrated (titled *Nymphéas jaunes et bleutres*)  
Kunsthalle Basel, *Basler Privat bestiz*, 1957, no. 140, n.p., illustrated (titled *Etude pour les nymphéas I*)  
Basel, Galerie Beyeler, *Claude Monet: Letzte Werke*, 1962, no. 5, n.p.  
Schaffhausen, Museums zu Allerheiligen, *Die Welt des Impressionismus*, 1963, no. 82, p. 25 (titled *Studie zu den Seerosen I*)

Städtische Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, *Variationen*, 1966, no. 356, n.p., illustrated (titled *Nymphéas I*)  
Kunstmuseum Basel, *Claude Monet: Nymphéas. Impression-Vision*, 1986, no. 31, p. 69, illustrated in color; p. 175  
Kunstmuseum Basel, *Die Impressionisten. Cézanne. Degas. Gauguin. Manet. Monet. Pissarro: die Sammlung mit Leihgaben aus Privatbesitz*, 1997

#### LITERATURE

Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet: Biographie et catalogue raisonné*, vol. IV, Geneva, 1985, no. 1789, pp. 252-53, illustrated  
Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet: Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. IV, Cologne, 1996, no. 1789, pp. 843-44, illustrated in color  
Jean-Dominique Rey and Denis Rouart, *Monet Water Lilies: The Complete Series*, Paris, 2008, n.n., p. 133, illustrated in color





There are few themes in the history of modern art as celebrated as Claude Monet's *Nymphéas*. The very mention of the Impressionist movement invariably conjures images of the lushly rendered water lilies that Monet began painting in the late 1890s and refined until the last years of his life. Executed in a kaleidoscopic palette of jewel-toned purples and luscious blues, energized by the touches of white, pink and yellow used to describe the namesake flowers, the present *Nymphéas* is an exceptional example of Monet's deft ability to translate fleeting atmosphere and the protean effects of light into paint. *Nymphéas* stands as the forerunner of a specific series of water lilies typified by more elaborate backgrounds featuring the nuanced reflections of trees along the opposite bank of the pond. It is precisely Monet's use of the pond as a technical device to blur the boundary between the real and the reflected which imparts on the present work its distinctly modern inflection. In its close cropping and all-over painterly effect, *Nymphéas* likewise marks a radical, early foray into abstraction, one which would prove a decisive stylistic inroad for the Abstract Expressionists who, following in Monet's footsteps, would come to transform the idiom of modern art thirty years later.

In 1883, Monet purchased his property in Giverny, a small village 50 miles northwest of Paris, and soon began designing the verdant gardens that provided the inspiration for his acclaimed body of late work (see fig. 1). Writing to his dealer and friend Paul Durand-Ruel upon his arrival in Giverny, Monet prophetically proclaimed: "Once settled, I hope to produce masterpieces" (quoted in Exh. Cat., New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Monet's Years at Giverny*, 1978, pp. 15-16). In the interplay between nature, atmosphere and the effects of light, Monet found in his pond at Giverny the ultimate Impressionist subject. By the time Monet started on

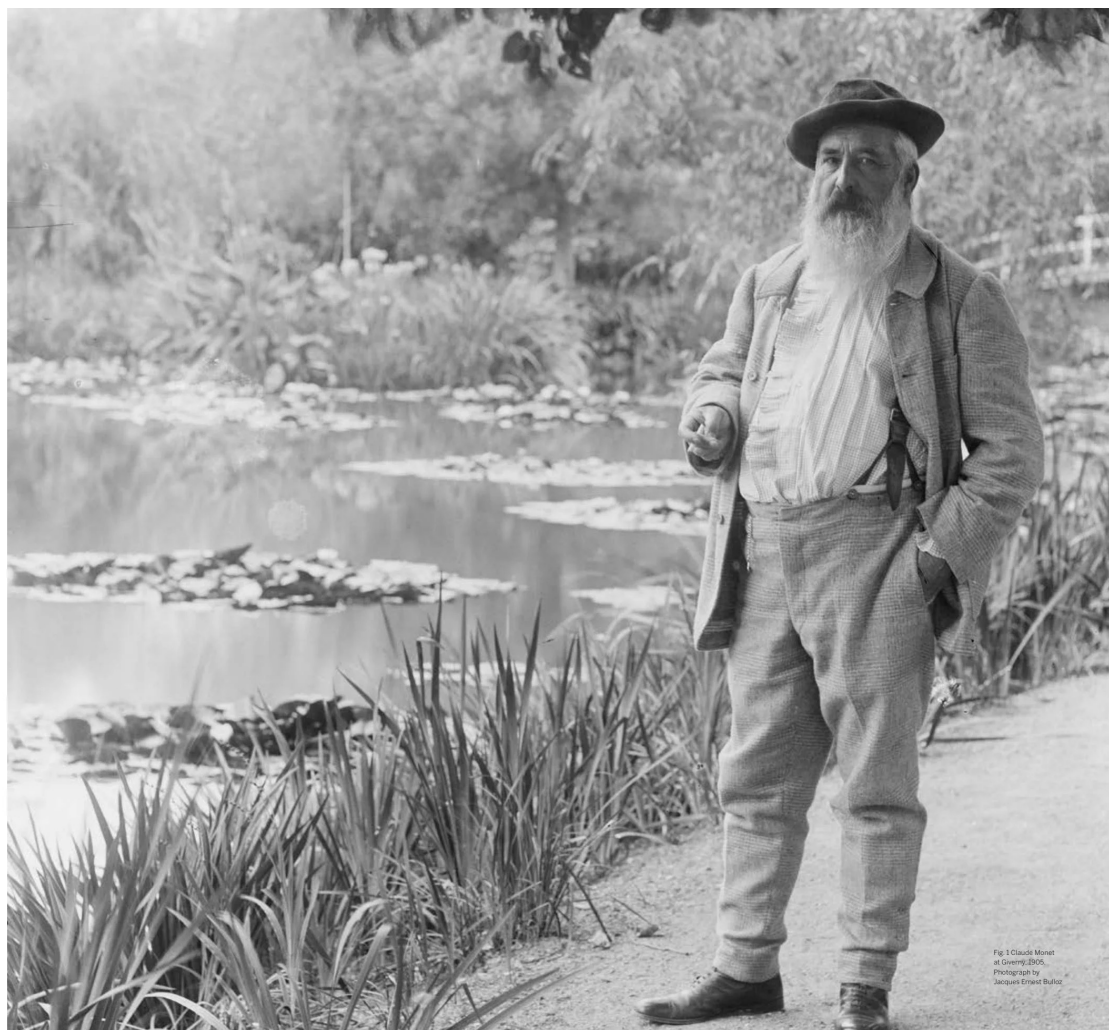


Fig. 1 Claude Monet  
at Giverny, 1905.  
Photograph by  
Jacques Ernest Buhot



the present work in 1914, however, he had effectively mastered the tenets of Impressionism and begun to move beyond them, marking a shift away from mimetic observation toward an aspiration for the purely atmospheric. In this later period Monet "portrayed the transient so truly that we are forced to conclude that he painted in the absence of his subject... The instantaneity of Monet, far from being passive, requires an unusual power of generalization, of abstraction... Monet declares: here is nature, not as you or I habitually see it, but as you are able to see it, not in this or that particular effect but in others like it" (Michel Butor quoted in Exh. Cat., New York, Gagosian Gallery, *Claude Monet: Late Work*, 2010, p. 10).

In 1903, Monet began to dispense with the conventional structures of landscape painting, narrowing his scope to focus directly on the surface of the pond and its reflections. In these earlier works on the theme, the illusion of pictorial depth is upheld by the diminishing forms of the lilies, as they recede towards an invisible horizon. By 1910, however, Monet went a step further to remove any lingering suggestion of perspective. Hovering above his subject from this new vantage point, Monet was presented

with an almost flat plane of water and increasingly came to treat the surface of the canvas as if it were a mirror to that of the pond itself. When compared with the 1906 canvas held in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, the transformative effect of this shift in perspective on the overall composition becomes apparent (see fig. 2). Whereas in the 1906 canvas, there maintains a palpable suggestion of perspectival depth, in the present work the group of lilies in the top left and bottom right corners of the work appear almost flat against the water's surface, rendered from the same scale, distance and angle, just a few degrees shy of a bird's eye view. The ovoid lily pads offer the only suggestion of a recession in space, as opposed to the circular shape they would take when seen directly from above. The distorted perspective is heightened by the rotation of the horizontal surface of the water onto the vertical orientation of the canvas, distending the composition in a strangely frontal extension. Meanwhile, Monet's masterful handling of tone in the modulated blue expanse at the center confers the imperceptible depth of the pond onto the painted surface. "This interplay between flatness and depth,

ABOVE LEFT  
The present work

ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Claude Monet,  
*Nymphéas*, 1906,  
The Art Institute  
of Chicago

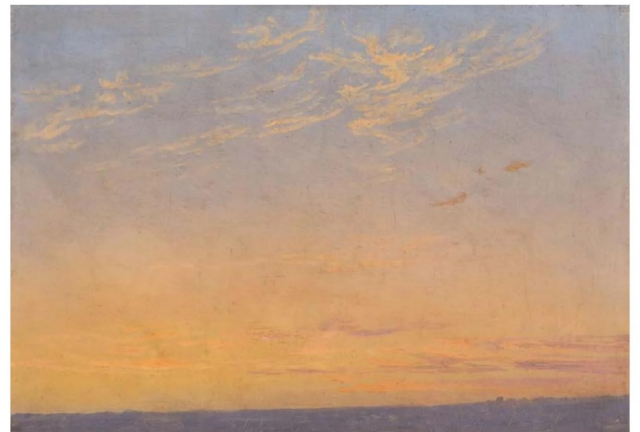
OPPOSITE  
Fig. 3 Caspar David  
Friedrich, *Evening*, 1824,  
Kunsthalle Mannheim

between art and illusion, gives these pictures much of their dynamism, allowing the artist to develop their decorative possibilities without ever losing sight of their origins in nature" (Richard Kendall, ed., *Monet by Himself: Paintings, Drawings, Pastels, Letters*, London, 1989, p. 14).

As such, the edge of the canvas becomes an indeterminate mediator, at once circumscribing the water within its limits, and, through the cropping of the flowers, suggestive of an endless expanse beyond it. As the viewer levitates atop the work's surface, the result is a quality akin to the sublime. A philosophy tracing back to the 1st century, the sublime was repopularized by 19th century Romantic painters who used it to create landscapes in which the viewer was utterly subsumed by the incomprehensible breadth and majesty of nature. What was achieved through the awe-inspiring vastness of Caspar David Friedrich's 1824 *Evening* is here achieved through the reverse pictorial tool—through the proliferating

magnitude of the pond seen from up close (see fig. 3). As Georges Clemenceau, a long-time friend and supporter of Monet's, observes: "All the radiating energy of the sky and earth is thus summoned to appear before us for the unutterable stupefaction of a show, wherein the joys of dreams and the freshness of primitive sensation merge. One senses an unflinching aspiration for the infinite from the most subtle sensations of tangible reality, which spread from reflection to reflection, until they reach the ultimate shades of what is imperceptible" (Georges Clemenceau quoted in Exh. Cat., Paris, Centre Culturel du Marais, *Claude Monet at the Time of Giverny*, 1983, p. 187).

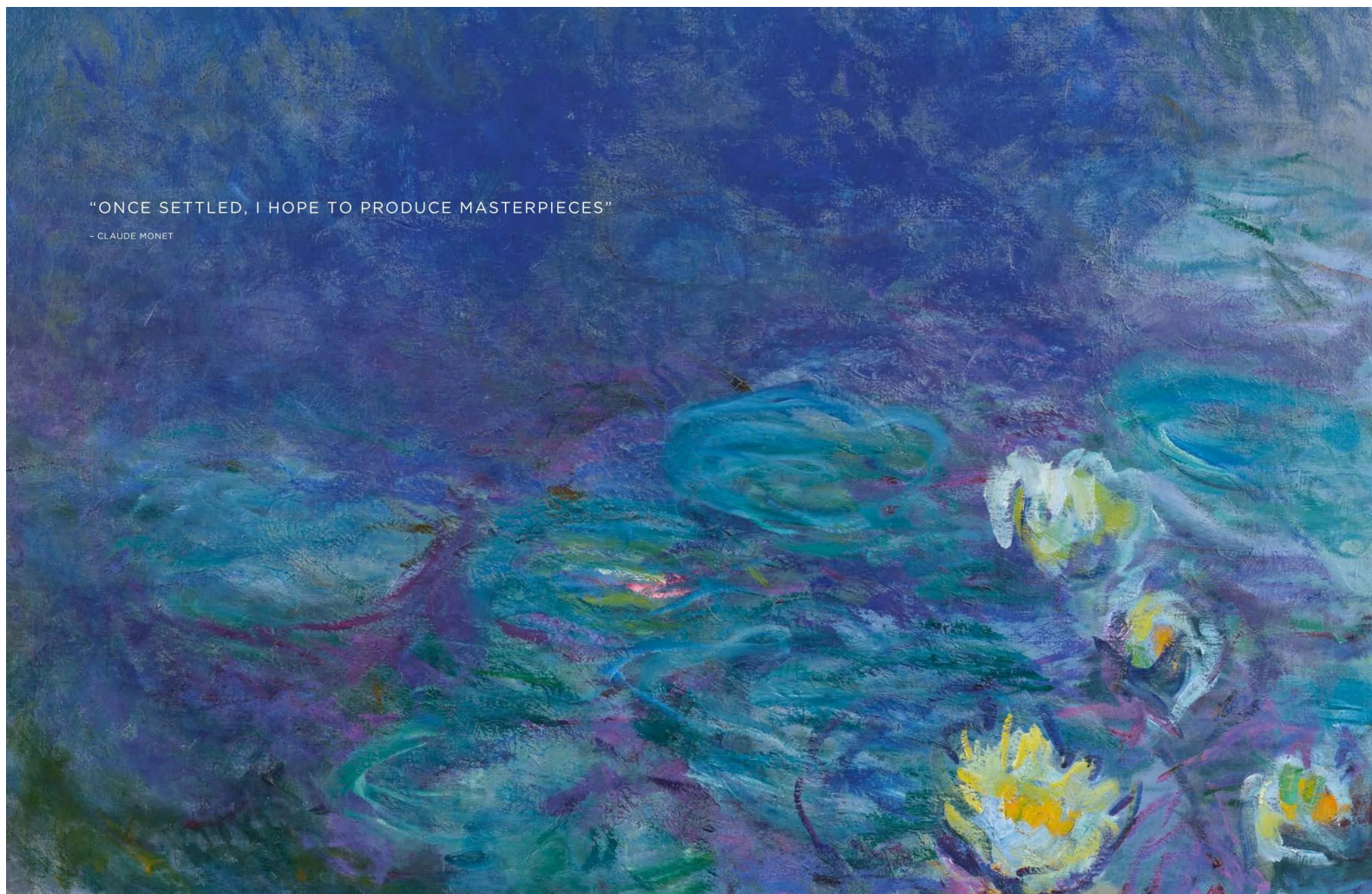
In both its composition and size, the present *Nymphéas* marks a radical shift in Monet's approach to a subject which, both at the time and in posterity, has come to be regarded as one of the most celebrated motifs in his canonical oeuvre. Measuring a remarkable 68 by 51 inches, the work is a towering





"ONCE SETTLED, I HOPE TO PRODUCE MASTERPIECES"

- CLAUDE MONET



example of the monumental canvases which would come to populate his late output. Larger canvases like that of the present work allowed the artist to explore the *Nymphéas* theme with a freedom of expression that was otherwise restricted by his earlier, smaller scale. The resulting close chromatic range and all-over composition, which heralded a shift from the painterly conventions of its time, prophetically anticipates the origins of the large-scale gestural canvases of the later New York School. According to William Rubin, the masterpieces of this later generation, particularly the monumental canvases of Jackson Pollock, the father of Abstract Expressionism, "are related to the late Monets not only in aspects of their plasticity but in their intimacy, a quality they share with the wall-size pictures of Rothko, Newman and Still" (William Rubin, "Jackson Pollock and the Modern Tradition, Part II," *Artforum*, February 1967, p. 18).

In the years after World War II, Monet's garden at Giverny and his paintings in Paris became a site of pilgrimage for young American artists studying in France. Among them was Ellsworth Kelly, who saw dozens of the artist's works on a visit to Giverny in 1952. So taken by their scale and gestural brushwork, Kelly painted his own sweeping green canvas, *Tableau*

*Vert*, as an homage to Monet (see fig. 4). A kinship can also be felt in Clyfford Still's 1953, wherein the hints of red along the lower edge, like the water lilies in the present work, are used to contrast and in turn emphasize the depths of the blue filling the rest of the canvas (see fig. 5). Kelly's attention to the acute differences in shade and tone likewise echo Monet's sensitivity to the chromatic effects of light on the pond's surface.

But the most immediate influence may be seen in the work of Joan Mitchell, whose immersive abstractions of the French landscape are deeply indebted to Monet. In 1955, Mitchell began dividing her time between New York and France where in 1968 she moved permanently, buying a home just a few miles from Monet's in Giverny. *La Grande Vallée V* (see fig. 6), executed in 1983, stands as a striking compositional parallel to the present *Nymphéas*. Here Mitchell translates Monet's subtle painterly style into her distinctive abstract vocabulary. The hints of green scattered throughout the periwinkle brushstrokes filling the upper register echo Monet's careful study of the trees reflected on the pond, while the yellow brushstrokes, climbing up from the bottom of the canvas, offer a reinterpretation of the water lilies themselves. When examined from up close, however,

BELOW LEFT  
Fig. 4 Ellsworth Kelly,  
*Tableau Vert*, 1952,  
The Art Institute  
of Chicago

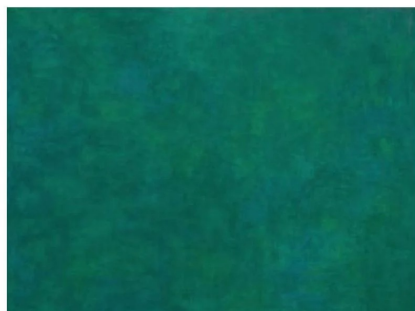
BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 5 Clyfford Still,  
1953, 1953, Tate  
Modern, London

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 6 Joan Mitchell,  
*La Grande Vallée V*,  
1983, Centre national  
des arts plastiques,  
Paris

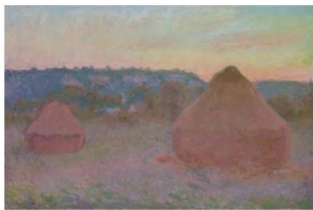


"LATE MONET IS A MIRROR IN WHICH THE FUTURE CAN BE READ. THE GENERATION THAT, IN ABOUT 1950, REDISCOVERED IT, ALSO TAUGHT US HOW TO SEE IT FOR OURSELVES. AND IT WAS MONET WHO ALLOWED US TO RECOGNIZE THIS GENERATION. OSMOSIS OCCURRED BETWEEN THEM. THE OLD MAN, MAD ABOUT COLOR, DRUNK WITH SENSATION, FIGHTING WITH TIME SO AS TO ABOLISH IT AND PLACE IT IN THE SPACE THAT SETS IT FREE, ATOMIZING IT INTO A SUMPTUOUS BOUQUET AND CREATING A COMPLETE FILM OF A 'BEYOND PAINTING' REMAINS OF CONSEQUENTIAL RELEVANCE TODAY."

- JEAN-DOMINIQUE REY, *MONET WATER LILIES. THE COMPLETE SERIES*, PARIS, 2008, P. 116





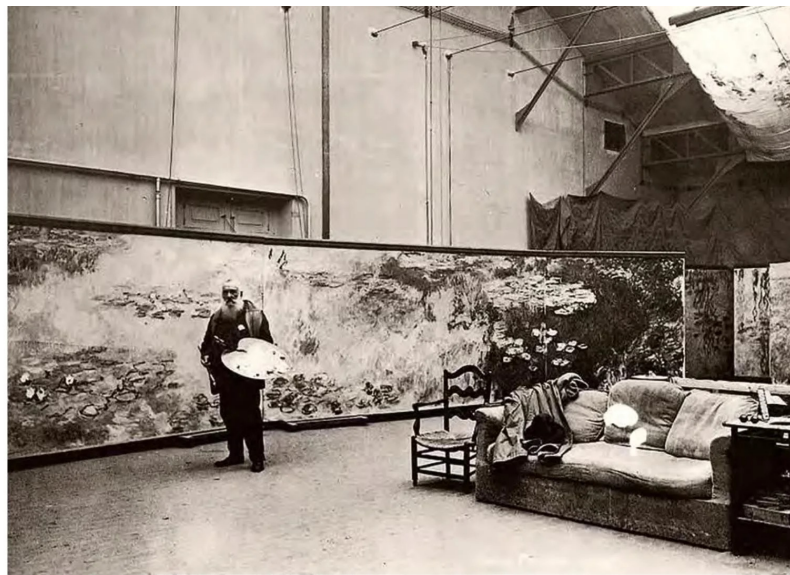


Monet's staccato brushwork, particularly his rendering of the flowers, has the same Expressionist affectation as Mitchell's. In dialogue, it becomes clear that the present *Nymphéas* and the larger body of Monet's late works offered the last remnants of figuration before modern art dissolved into pure abstraction.

Beyond the revolutionary leap into abstraction Monet takes with the present work, his predilection for the serial study of a subject likewise serves as a prescient forerunner to the practice of later generations of artists. The repeated investigation into the same motif was echoed and abstracted, for example, in the works of Mark Rothko, who later elevated the planes of color in Monet's work from the scale of the brushstroke to that of the canvas. Rothko himself elaborates on the impact Monet had on his own work: "Direct awareness of an essential humanity can be found in my work. Monet had this quality, and that is why I prefer him" (James Breslin, *Mark Rothko: A Biography*, Chicago, 2012, p. 301).

The distinctly Abstract Expressionist conception of an artwork as the transcription of the artist's emotions through the recorded movement of their hand can likewise be understood as a direct development of Monet's preoccupation with capturing a quality of instantaneity—the ultimate ambition of his serial work. As John House explains, "he was seeking a way of translating nature's most fleeting effects into fully realized, complete works of art. No longer could the impression be an end in itself; the work of art had to transcend the initial experience and yet still retain a sense of the immediacy of the experience, of 'l'instantanéité'" (John House, "Monet in 1890" in *ibid.*, p. 133). Completed over the last twenty years of his life, Monet's present series of *Nymphéas* stands as the culmination of his success within the format.

The series was a recurring mode of address within the Impressionist lexicon, famously adopted by Camille Pissarro in his repeated study of the *Jardin des Tuileries*, as it was by Paul Cézanne with his series



OPPOSITE PAGE TOP

Fig. 7 Claude Monet, *Meules*, effet de nuage, le matin, 1891, Tite J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Fig. 8 Claude Monet, *Meules* (fin de journée, automne), 1890-91, The Art Institute of Chicago

Fig. 9 Claude Monet, *Meules*, fin de nuit, 1891, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

ABOVE  
Fig. 10 Claude Monet in his studio at Giverny, circa 1900

on Mont Sainte-Victoire. But beginning in the 1890s, with his canonical *Meules*, Monet distinguished his approach from that of his peers, transforming the "series" from merely a mode of address to a subject in and of itself (see figs. 7-9). When in 1891 Monet chose to exhibit 15 of these early *Meules* canvases in a solo exhibition at Paul Durand-Ruel's Paris gallery, he decisively introduced the concept of sequence into our understanding of the series. When viewed together, the explicit subject of each canvas shifted from the namesake *Meule* to the nuanced differences between each representation of it. Qualities of light, atmosphere, weather and tone came to carry substantive weight within the composition as much as its conventional subject matter did. Monet would develop his serial approach through views of the bank of the Seine, Waterloo Bridge and Rouen Cathedral.

In its mature iteration, the series of *Nymphéas* communicates that momentary quality without need for accompaniment by another canvas. As exemplified by the present work, the subtlety of tonal modulation, fragility of reflection, and overwhelming nuance of spectral chromatism testifies to a fleeting moment captured. The work stands alone, at once an invocation of the broader theme and a testament to the singularity of each canvas within its schema. Likewise on display, however, is the almost paradoxical effect which comes to define Monet's late series of work: as he narrows his focus to the meticulous study of a single subject, the scope of that investigation proliferates far beyond a singular motif.

The luminous effect captured in the present work and expounded upon in the broader series, is perhaps best described by the artist himself: "I have painted

these water lilies a great deal, modifying my viewpoint each time, transforming the motif according to the season and according to the different light effects that each season brings. Besides, the effect varies constantly, not only from one season to the next, but from one minute to the next, since the water flowers are far from being the whole scene; really they are just the accompaniment. The essence of the motif is the mirror of water whose appearance alters at every moment, thanks to the patches of sky which are reflected in it, and which give it its light and movement. The passing cloud, the freshening breeze, the storm which threatens and breaks, the wind which blows hard and then suddenly abates, the light growing dim and then bright again—so many factors, undetectable to the uninitiated eye, which transforms the colouring and disturb the planes of water” (Claude Monet in Francois Thiébaud-Sisson, “Les Nymphéas de Claude Monet,” *Revue de l’art*, 1927, p. 44).

It was on this large scale that Monet first conceived of his water lilies as a decorative motif, a project which

would find its culmination in the magnum opus of his Giverny period, the cycle of *Grandes décorations*. In 1914, the same year that he began work on the present *Nymphéas*, as the series of canvases on the subject executed on an increasingly large scale came to accumulate within his studio, Monet in turn began placing the different views of his water lilies next to each other in various combinations. One can imagine, for example, the way in which the present composition might figure into the larger expanse of water directly to the left of Monet as he stands before the working canvas in his studio at Giverny (see fig. 10). With these *Grand décorations*, Monet envisioned an artwork which would immerse his viewer in the proliferating world of his painted water lilies as he himself was in his gardens at Giverny. The final murals would bring the abstraction pioneered in the present work to its apogee, striking a remarkable harmony between figuration and decoration, observation and experience.

Monet tried tirelessly to secure the gift of his *Grandes décorations* to France as a commemoration of the end of the war; protracted negotiations led by

Fig. 11 Claude Monet, *Nymphéas, Grandes décorations*, 1914–26, installed in the Musée de l’Orangerie, Paris

Georges Clemenceau over the official donation to the French state went on for years. Decisions about the permanent location of these works in Paris were discussed and changed multiple times. Meanwhile, the *Grandes décorations* remained in the artist’s large studio until his death, as in his last years he found himself unable to part with them. Some months after his passing, the works were moved from Giverny to Paris where each canvas was photographed in the Cours Visconti at the Musée du Louvre. They were then formally transferred to the Orangerie in 1927. Initially built as a winter greenhouse to shelter the Jardin des Tuileries orange trees, the Orangerie had been expressly redesigned to receive Monet’s magnum opus. The works were mounted in two oval-shaped rooms, and lit, as Monet specified, in as close a way to natural light as possible (see fig. 11). There they remain today, hung in perpetuity as a monument to Monet’s inimitable vision.

“It took me some time to understand my water lilies. I had planted them for pleasure; I cultivated them without thinking of painting them. A landscape

does not sink in to you all at once. And then, suddenly, I had the revelation of the magic of my pond. I took up my palette. Since then I have hardly had another model” (Claude Monet quoted in Marc Elder, *Chez Claude Monet à Giverny*, Paris, 1924, p. 12). All of the revolutionary pictorial strides Monet pioneered with the present *Nymphéas* can, at the most fundamental level, be traced back to this unadulterated devotion to the study of his pond at Giverny. Each nuance of tone and subtlety of light is indebted to an eye so acutely familiar with its subject that even its most ephemeral qualities become intrinsic. It is precisely on account of the depth of his understanding of the play of light and atmosphere on the water’s surface that he is able to push its representation to the brink of abstraction and still retain the recognizability which resonates so potently within the viewer. Executed in the twilight of his life, the present *Nymphéas* can therefore be understood as the accumulated effect of observation—not simply over the course of the sitting in which Monet painted it, but over the decades of study which preceded it.





## THE MUSEUM CONTEXT CLAUDE MONET'S MONUMENTAL NYPHÉAS

1914-1920



**NYPHÉAS**  
175 by 135.4 cm.; 68 1/4 by 53 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1789)  
THE PRESENT WORK



**NYPHÉAS**  
130 by 150 cm.; 51 1/4 by 59 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1783)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
180 by 146 cm.; 65 1/4 by 56 in.  
Executed circa 1914-17 (W.1788)  
M. H. de Young Memorial  
Museum, Fine Arts Museums  
of San Francisco



**NYPHÉAS**  
150 by 200 cm.; 59 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1791)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
150.5 by 200 cm.; 59 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1793)  
Asahi Group Oyamazaki Villa Museum  
of Art, Kyoto



**NYPHÉAS**  
160 by 180 cm.; 63 1/4 by 71 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-15 (W.1795)  
Portland Art Museum



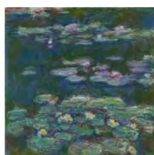
**NYPHÉAS**  
150 by 200 cm.; 59 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1796)  
Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich



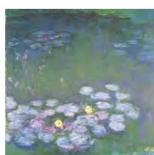
**NYPHÉAS**  
130 by 153 cm.; 51 1/4 by 60 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1797)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
200.5 by 201 cm.; 79 by 79 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916 (W.1800)  
National Museum of Western Art,  
Tokyo



**NYPHÉAS BLANCS  
ET JAUNES**  
200 by 200 cm.; 78 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1915-17 (W.1801)  
Kunstmuseum Winterthur



**NYPHÉAS**  
200 by 200 cm.; 78 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1802)  
Asahi Group Oyamazaki Villa Museum  
of Art, Kyoto



**NYPHÉAS**  
200.7 by 215 cm.; 78 1/4 by 84 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1804)  
Toledo Museum of Art



**NYPHÉAS**  
180 by 200 cm.; 70 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1807)  
National Gallery of Australia,  
Canberra



**NYPHÉAS**  
200 by 200 cm.; 78 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1811)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
180 by 205 cm.; 70 1/4 by 80 1/4 in.  
Executed circa 1915-17 (W.1815)  
Wallraf-Richartz Museum,  
Cologne



**NYPHÉAS  
BOUQUET D'HERBES**  
200 by 213 cm.; 78 1/4 by 83 3/4 in.  
Executed in 1914-17 (W.1817)  
Onchu Art Museum, Naoshima



**NYPHÉAS**  
150 by 197 cm.; 59 by 77 1/2 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1852)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS BLEUS**  
204 by 200 cm.; 80 3/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1853)  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
200 by 180 cm.; 78 1/4 by 70 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1854)  
Fondation Beyeler, Basel



**NYPHÉAS**  
200 by 180 cm.; 78 1/4 by 70 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1855)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
130.2 by 200.7 cm.; 51 1/4 by 79 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1858)  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York



**NYPHÉAS,  
REFLETS DE SAULE**  
130 by 157 cm.; 51 1/4 by 61 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1859)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS,  
REFLETS DE SAULE**  
130 by 200 cm.; 51 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1861)  
Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art



**NYPHÉAS,  
REFLETS DE SAULE**  
200 by 200 cm.; 78 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1862)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**NYPHÉAS**  
130 by 200 cm.; 51 1/4 by 78 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1863)  
The McNay Art Museum, San Antonio



**NYPHÉAS**  
130 by 152 cm.; 51 1/4 by 59 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1916-19 (W.1864)  
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



**LE BASSIN AUX NYPHÉAS**  
131.2 by 201.3 cm.; 51 1/4 by 79 1/4 in.  
Executed circa 1916 (W.1865)  
Museum Folkwang, Essen



**NYPHÉAS**  
130.2 by 201.9 cm.; 51 1/4 by 79 1/4 in.  
Executed in 1917-26 (W.1889)  
Art Institute of Chicago

## 9 PABLO PICASSO

1840 - 1926

### TÊTE DE FEMME

stamped with the foundry mark C. Valsuani Cire Perdue  
bronze

height: 19 1/4 in. 50 cm.

Conceived in 1951 and cast in an edition of 2.

\$ 7,000,000-10,000,000

#### PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist  
Galerie Beyeler, Basel (acquired from the above)  
Private Collection, Switzerland (acquired from the  
above in 1986)  
Sotheby's, New York, 11 May 1987, lot 91  
(consigned by the above)  
Private Collection, United States (acquired at the  
above sale through Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago)  
Galerie Daniel Malingue, Paris (acquired from the  
above through Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago in  
1997)  
Acquired from the above in 2001 by the  
present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Geneva, Petit Palais, Musée d'Art Moderne,  
*Picasso, Passion et création. Les 30 dernières  
années*, 1998, no. 8, p. 22, illustrated in color; p.  
106, illustration of another cast (in the artist's  
Vallauris studio); p. 117

#### LITERATURE

Hélène Parmelin, *Picasso, Les Dames de Mougins,  
Secrets d'alcôve d'un atelier*, Paris, 1964, p. 73,  
illustration in color of another cast  
Exh. Cat., Paris, Grand Palais and Petit Palais,  
*Hommage à Pablo Picasso, 1966-67*, no. 301,  
illustration of another cast  
Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art,  
*The Sculpture of Picasso, 1967-68*, no. 110, p. 131,  
illustration of another cast

Werner Spies, *Sculpture by Picasso with a  
Catalogue of the Works*, New York, 1971, no. 412, p.  
212, illustration of another cast; p. 309

Exh. Cat., Nationalgalerie Berlin, *Pablo Picasso,  
Das plastische Werk, 1983-84*, no. 412, p. 232; p.  
353, illustration of another cast

Pierre Descargues, John Russel and Edward  
Quinn, *Picasso, Paris, 1974*, n.p., illustration of the  
plaster version (in the artist's Vallauris studio)  
Dominique Bozo, Marie-Laure Bernadac, Michèle  
Richet and Hélène Seckel-Klein, *Picasso Museum,  
Paris: Painting, Papier Collés, Picture Reliefs,  
Sculptures, Ceramics*, Paris, 1985, n.p., illustration of  
the plaster version (in the artist's Vallauris studio)

Edward Quinn and Pierre Daix, *The Private Picasso*,  
Boston, 1987, p. 62, illustration of the plaster  
version (in the artist's Vallauris studio)

Exh. Cat., London, Tate Gallery, *Picasso: Sculptor/  
Painter, 1994*, p. 251, illustration of the plaster  
version (in the artist's Vallauris studio)

Werner Spies and Christine Piot, *Picasso:  
The Sculptures*, Stuttgart, 2000, no. 412, p. 373,  
illustration of another cast

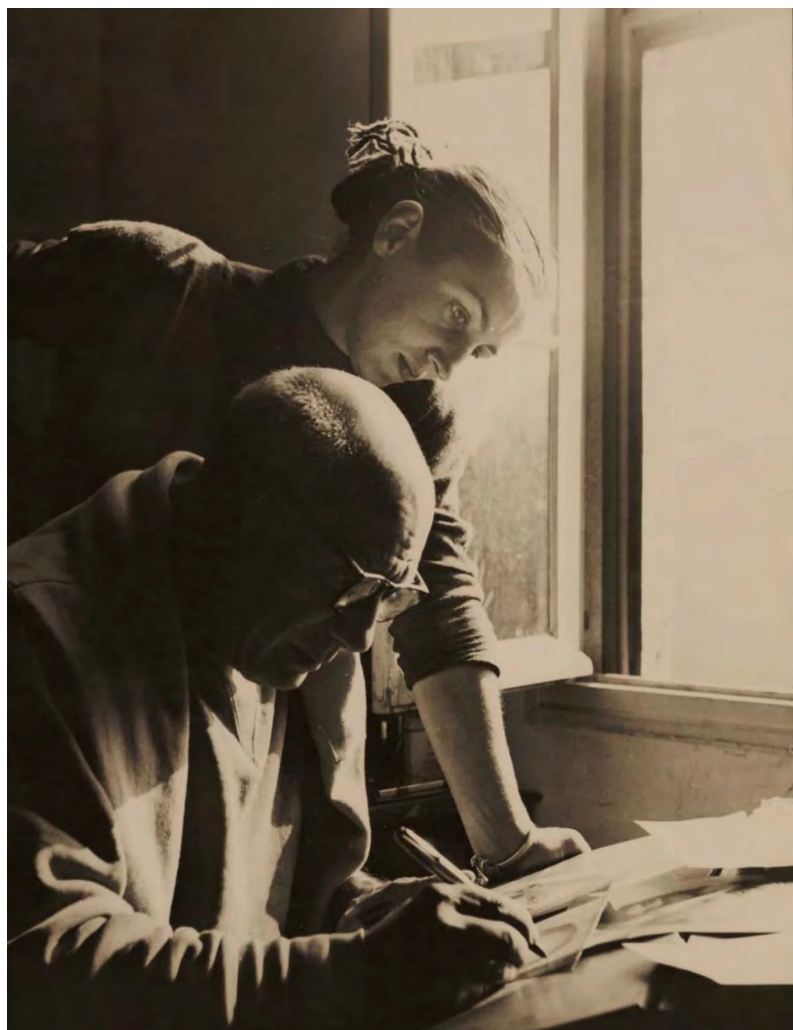
Exh. Cat., London, Gagosian Gallery, *Picasso,  
The Mediterranean Years, 1945-1962*, 2010, p. 312,  
illustration of the plaster version (in the artist's  
Vallauris studio)

Exh. Cat., New York, Gagosian Gallery, *Picasso and  
Françoise Gilot, Paris-Vallauris, 1943-1953*, 2012,  
p. 243, illustration of the plaster version (in the  
artist's Vallauris studio)

Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art,  
*Picasso Sculpture, 2016*, p. 202, illustration of the  
plaster version (in the artist's Vallauris studio)







ABOVE:  
Fig. 1 Pablo Picasso,  
*Femme assise en  
costume vert*, 1953.  
Private Collection.  
Sold: Sotheby's,  
New York, 12 May 2021,  
lot 1010 for  
\$20.9 million

OPPOSITE:  
Pablo Picasso and  
Françoise Gilot,  
circa 1945



When the photographer Brassai met the young Françoise Gilot at Pablo Picasso's Paris studio on the Rue des Grands-Augustins in December of 1943, he marveled in his first impression: "Her entire personality radiated an impression of freshness and restless vitality" (quoted in Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation*, 1996-97, p. 415). In his life-size *Tête de femme* of 1951, Picasso translates into bronze precisely that commanding presence—Gilot's youthful effervescence and confident self-repose—by which both he and Brassai were so instantly taken. Picasso's relationship with Gilot, which spanned a decade from 1943 to 1953, would prove to be one of the most artistically rich and innovative periods in his storied career. An artist in her own right, Gilot proved a pivotal point of inspiration to Picasso, whose practice at the time saw his most concentrated and enthusiastic revival of sculpture up until that point (see fig. 6). *Tête de femme* is an exemplary vestige of that sculptural

renaissance. With its formal ingenuity and stylistic flair, the present bust attests to an artist who was ambidextrous in his ability to translate his altogether singular artistic vision into three-dimensional form.

Throughout his life, Picasso's art—particularly his depictions of his most-celebrated muses—served as a specter for his mood and opinions on the state of affairs, both personal and external. In the years directly preceding his move to the South of France, Picasso's output bears the signs of his deep affliction with the violence and political tumult brought about by the war. In his portraits of his lover Dora Maar, she was transformed into the motif of the weeping woman, a metonym for the suffering felt across Europe. But the fecundity of his production in this subsequent phase of life, shared with Gilot and their two children in the French seaside town of Vallauris, attests to an inventive impulse brought about by the liberated post-war condition. Sculpture proved a constantly regenerative medium through which Picasso could channel his sheer creative energy and inclination for playful



"ALL THE LIFE IN THE WORK DEPENDS ON THIS FUSION OF SCULPTURE AND MODELING. IT IS AT THE PRECISE MOMENT WHEN THE CREATOR, WHO HOLDS THE MUD BETWEEN THUMB AND INDEX FINGER... THAT THE FUTURE LIFE OF WHAT HE HAS CREATED IS DECIDED. LIFE IS PERHAPS THIS HESITATION, THIS POINT OF EQUILIBRIUM. SCULPTURE IS THE ART OF THE INTELLIGENCE."

- PABLO PICASSO QUOTED IN LOUIS PARROT, "PICASSO AT WORK," *MASSÉS AND MAINSTREAM*, MARCH 1948

experimentation, and the present *Tête de femme* testifies to the unprecedented concentration and bravado with which he committed to the artform. Picasso found in Vallauris a wealth of art historical inspiration. With a venerated tradition of ceramic production tracing back to antiquity, threads of art, culture and craftsmanship were woven into the very fabric of the coastal town. In large part due to Picasso's prolonged stay and the fruitfulness of his output, the 1950s in particular marked a modern golden age in Vallauris' storied history. As he exhumed centuries-old ceramic practices and translated them into his

distinctly modern dialect, history became fused with his daily life and Gilot, with whom he shared that life, became equally inextricable from the artistic narrative he built around it. Gilot's piercing gaze, almond eyes, arched eyebrows, and long, narrow nose—characteristics which had become distinctive of her portrait-type within Picasso's oeuvre—are here on display with the strength and clarity of his greatest oils (see figs. 1). The incised geometry used to describe her face reappears in Picasso's portraits of his second wife Jacqueline, poised in both works as an invocation of their commanding presence (see fig. 3).

At the same time, however, the sculptural techniques employed in the present work bear evidence of the artist bending to the stylized language of ancient carving, an influence he felt in excess in his new home on the Mediterranean. The work therefore occupies a unique place within his oeuvre—not a submission of his own style to a broader aesthetic, but the formulation of a visual language, classical in its aesthetic yet modern in its rendering, which telescopes between the past and present.

In its combination of textures and techniques—the incised carving used to describe her features, the smooth, hyper-stylized curlique of her ears, the roughly hewn neck, and the found material, perhaps a wooden box, cast in bronze as the base—the present bust testifies to the creative ingenuity that characterized Picasso's rich sculptural output at Vallauris. On his morning commute from their home, La Galloise, to his studio, an old perfume factory just one hundred yards from the Madoura Pottery studio on the rue du Fournaise, Picasso passed by

a field that served as a dumping ground for local potters, providing him a trove of shards of broken pots, old tools, pieces of scrap metal and bits of wood. Picasso soon began collecting these pieces of detritus, bringing them back to his studio where they served as the starting point for his sculptural inventions. As Gilot recalls: "I asked Pablo one day why he gave himself so much trouble to incorporate all these bits and pieces of junk into his sculptures rather than simply starting from scratch in whatever material—plaster, for example—he wanted to use and building up his forms in that." As Picasso explained in response, "The material itself, the form and texture of those pieces, often gives me the key to the whole sculpture... I'm out to fool the mind rather than the eye" (quoted in Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake, *Life with Picasso*, London, 1990, p. 297).

Images from his du Fournaise studio reveal the artist's innate sensitivity to formal construction which informed these sculptural assemblages (see fig. 2). From the heaps of found material which



OPPOSITE  
Fig. 2 Pablo Picasso at  
La Fournaise, Vallauris,  
1953, with the plaster  
of *Tête de femme*  
above. Photograph  
by Edward Quinn

RIGHT  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
*Portrait de Jacqueline  
aux fleurs*, 1954.  
Private Collection





lined the studio's floor, Picasso would test different combinations, taking inspiration from the figurative resemblances implied in certain shapes. One image in particular shows the working plaster for the present work pictured with a hat made from the shards of two broken pots, which Picasso ultimately decided to omit from the final version. What this working model importantly reveals, however, is the sleight of hand which at once transforms the found material while still preserving the integrity of its original meaning. Picasso's sculptures of the period thus come to occupy a unique space between the ready-made and a self-effacing bricolage. As Picasso explained, his interest in resemblance worked against the conventional direction of association: "People have said for ages that a woman's hips are shaped like a vase. It's no longer poetic; it's become a cliché. I take a vase and with it I make a woman. I take the old metaphor, make it work in the opposite direction and give it a new lease of life" (Picasso to Giot, quoted in Exh. Cat., New York, Gagosian Gallery, Picasso, *The Mediterranean Years*, p. 309). Within this ideation, his project finds kinship with that of the Surrealists, whose notion of the uncanny was based on the idea that unexpected parallels could be excited by the combination of two disparate objects. The difference, however, is Picasso's insistence on authorial control and, as exemplified with *Tête de femme*, his adherence to a figurative impulse. As he explains, "I always try to observe nature... I insist on likeness, a more profound likeness, more real than the real, achieving the surreal. This is the way I understood

surrealism but the word has been used quite differently" (Pablo Picasso, quoted in Andre Wood, "En peinture tout n'est que signe, nous dit Picasso", *Arts*, no. 22, 29 June 1945, p. 236).

The heavily worked surfaces at once serve as a remarkable record of the artist's hand, and of his distinct ability to transform medium into form. The process of casting in bronze imbues the work with a material unity which simultaneously overcomes and accentuates the heterogeneity of its elements. In the case of the present *Tête de femme*, however, the materiality lends a distinct sense of weight which adds to Giot's pure, monumental presence. The stepped elements describing her shoulders and bust increase exponentially as they move closer to the base, conferring on her posture an overall sense of groundedness which reflects back onto her austere disposition. The emotional implications of her stoic expression are therefore heightened and reinforced by the solidity of her composition. And so, with his elemental understanding of the female form, Picasso imbues Giot with a mythic, timeless grandeur.

The monumentality he confers on the present *Tête de femme* underscores the reverence with which he viewed his female subject. It was a monumentality which was also in large part reserved exclusively within his sculpted oeuvre for his depictions of his most important muses. Throughout his career, Picasso returned to the bust in his representation of these seminal women—works which have come to be revered as the pinnacle of his sculptural achievement. From his cubist bust of Fernande Olivier,

ABOVE LEFT  
Fig. 4 Pablo Picasso,  
*Tête de femme*  
(Fernande), 1929-30,  
The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art,  
New York

ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 5 Pablo Picasso,  
*Buste de femme*, 1933,  
Musée Picasso, Paris

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 6 Pablo Picasso  
and Françoise Giot  
with the plaster  
of *Tête de femme* at  
Le Fournaux, Vallauris,  
1953. Photograph  
by Edward Quinn

to his sensuous plaster of Marie-Thérèse, to the commanding bronze of Dora Maar, and ultimately the present depiction of Giot, the sculpted portrait was transformed at Picasso's hand into a nuanced communicative idiom, enriched with all of the history that lay behind the form, and infused with all of the emotion inspired by its model (see figs. 4 and 5). When taken in context of *Tête de femme*, Barbara Thiemann and Evelyn Weiss' remarks on Picasso's bronze of Maar still ring true: "This strong, spiritualized head, with its powerful aura of human dignity and its remoteness from violence and subjugations, seems to convey a contrast, a kind of inner resistance. It recalls the stoical serenity of the gods of the ancient world" (Exh. Cat., Barcelona, Museu Picasso, Picasso, *The Ludwig Collection*, 1992-93).

Throughout his career, Picasso constantly returned to the leitmotif of the artist and his model. One cannot help but notice the striking parallel between the image of Picasso, Giot and the

present bust in his studio at Le Fournaux, and the retrospectively prophetic etching he made as part of his *Suite Vollard* nearly twenty years prior. This persistent self-identification with the great mythic sculptor of antiquity—or, as in his 1925 portrait of Marie-Thérèse, *La Statuaire*, of muse as both sculptor and sculpted—perhaps explains something of the creative empowerment he discovered in sculpture at this moment in his life (see Pablo Picasso, *La Statuaire*). Like the inspiration he found in his muses, these raw materials, transformed through the tactile, embodied act of assemblage, allowed Picasso to engage with the generative act of artistic creation in its purest form. The present *Tête de femme* thus serves as both a continuation and fulfillment of that celebrated motif, and of the fruit born out of that treasured relationship between artist and muse. The first in an edition of two, the present bronze has not been offered at auction since 1987.





"ART SHOULD ALWAYS MAKE US LAUGH AND  
FRIGHTEN US A LITTLE, BUT NEVER BORE US."

— JEAN DUBUFFET, *PROSPECTUS AUX AMATEURS DE TOUT GENRE*, PARIS, 1946, P. 43



10  
JEAN DUBUFFET

1901 - 1985

LE CÉRÉMONIEUX

signed J. Dubuffet and dated 54 (lower right);  
signed again, titled and dated juillet 54 (on the  
reverse)

oil and enamel on canvas

51 1/4 by 35 in. 130.2 by 88.9 cm.

Executed in July 1954.

\$ 2,500,000-3,500,000

PROVENANCE

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York  
Morton G. Neumann, Chicago (acquired from the  
above in 1960)  
Sotheby's, New York, 17 November 1998, lot 117  
(consigned by the estate of the above)  
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

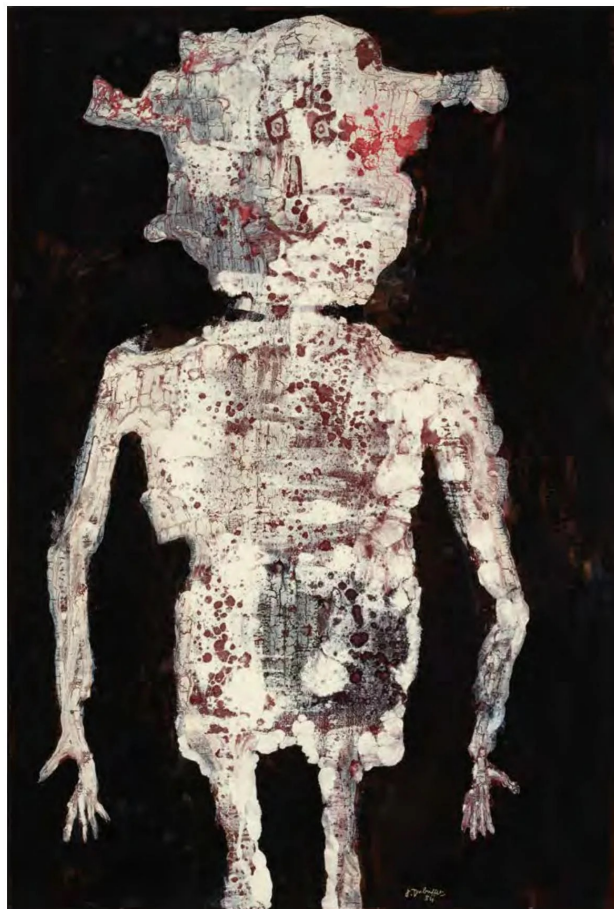
EXHIBITED

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Romantic Agony: From Goya to de Kooning*, 1959,  
n.n., p. 18  
Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du  
Louvre, *Rétrospective Jean Dubuffet, 1942-1960*,  
1960-61, no. 128, pl. 58, pp. 153, 225, 267; p. 313,  
illustrated

(probably) New York, The Museum of Modern Art;  
Art Institute of Chicago, and Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art, *The Work of Jean Dubuffet*, 1962  
(Chicago only)  
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art and Art  
Institute of Chicago, *The Morton G. Neumann  
Family Collection, Selected Works*, 1980-81, no.  
102, p. 102, illustrated in color  
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Tenth Anniversary of the East Building*, 1988-  
90, illustrated in color on the frontispiece (in  
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"AN ARTWORK IS ALL THE MORE ENTHRALLING THE MORE OF AN ADVENTURE IT HAS BEEN, PARTICULARLY IF IT BEARS THE MARK OF THIS ADVENTURE, AND IF ONE CAN DISCERN ALL THE STRUGGLES THAT OCCURRED BETWEEN THE ARTIST AND THE INTRACTABILITIES OF THE MATERIALS. AS IF HE HIMSELF DID NOT KNOW WHERE IT WOULD ALL LEAD."

— JEAN DUBUFFET QUOTED IN "NOTES FOR THE WELL-READ," IN MARC GLIMCHER, ED., *DUBUFFET: TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE REALITY*, NEW YORK, 1987, P. 69

A manifestation of Jean Dubuffet's inimitable manipulation of the painted surface, *Le Cérémonieux* is a striking portrait from a landmark decade in the artist's career. Executed in a summer-long period of intense experimentation with enamel-based paints, *Le Cérémonieux* celebrates Dubuffet's rebellious Art Brut philosophy through both style and materiality. The discordant mixture of enamel and oil created a turbulent surface—a form of abstraction at a chemical level and an apt trajectory within the same decade as the artist's introduction of sand, gravel and debris to his painted surfaces. With his quintessentially naïf and often gesturally raw figuration, Dubuffet derived inspiration from primitive and outsider art, charting new stylistic territory in figurative abstraction in the wake of the Second World War. Through deconstructing the figure, the painted surface and the conventional reflection of the material world, Dubuffet arrived at a new unique visual lexicon.

From a series of abstracted portraits created in 1954, *Le Cérémonieux* presents an imposing, pale silhouette against a dark ground tinged with traces of deep red. Flattened against the picture plane, the figure's startlingly playful, crude and simultaneously

absurdist grin is contrasted by the drips and stains of rust-colored paint commingled within its phantasmic form. Within the scope of Dubuffet's celebrated oeuvre, the 1950s represent the artist's exploration of the material, as exemplified by the present work. Contemporaneous with his experimentation with sand, tar, detritus, and other non-traditional media, the present work epitomizes the artist's obsession with texture and his innovations in manipulating the painted surface with varied media. Begun in July of 1954, Dubuffet combined enamel and oil paint: two incompatible mediums, the former which would dry rapidly, allowing little room for artistic intervention beyond the day the painting was made. The inharmonious mixture of oil and enamel created surfaces which would inherently mottle and craze. The artist described his fascination with the process in his notes:

"I combined these enamel paints with ordinary oil paint and, as they displayed a lively incompatibility, the result was a whole set of digitate spots and convolutions...The result, a whole succession of marbling (small internal branching and intricately embellished surfaces) which succeeds

OPPOSITE  
Jean Dubuffet in his  
Paris studio, 1955.  
Photograph by  
Robert Doisneau





in transporting the subject of the painting...to a world ruled by entirely different reasons, making them appear in an unaccustomed light. In this way, by the revelation of our familiar objects suddenly transformed and strange, is evoked, even quite startlingly sometimes (at least for me), these strange bewildering worlds that exercise a kind of fascination" (Jean Dubuffet in Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art (and traveling), *The Work of Jean Dubuffet*, 1962, pp. 92-96).

With his artistic alchemy, Dubuffet facilitated a new automatism of materiality. Through the combination of these opposite materials, Dubuffet, rather than merely painting a subject, would "transport" it onto the canvas. Using a fine brush, he would then complete these paintings with care, emphasizing the minute details provoked by the opposing nature of the paints. The repellent comingling of the burgundy dispersions within the figure's white form connotes corrosion,

decay, dematerialization and the categorical erosion of the human figure visualized in the wake of the Second World War. In *Le Cérémonieux*, the figure smiles as its material surface appears to degrade, reflecting its inherent properties of corporeality and conjuring the visceral depictions by artists like Chaim Soutine (see fig. 2).

During and following the Second World War, like many other European artists confronted with its horrors, Dubuffet was left with the need to rid visual art of its heroic aims and inhibitions in reflecting collective societal conditions. Alongside other artists active in Paris in this decade, particularly Wols and Fautrier, Dubuffet embraced an intuitive style that championed spontaneity, not unlike the automatic tenets of Surrealism, and rejected formal Western ideals of beauty and skill. Influenced by Hans Brinzhorn's book *Artistry of the Mentality III*, Dubuffet coined the term Art Brut, meaning "raw art"

ABOVE LEFT  
Fig. 1 Pablo Picasso,  
*Femme aux mains  
jointes (étude pour  
Les Femmes d'Alger)*,  
1907, Musée Picasso, Paris

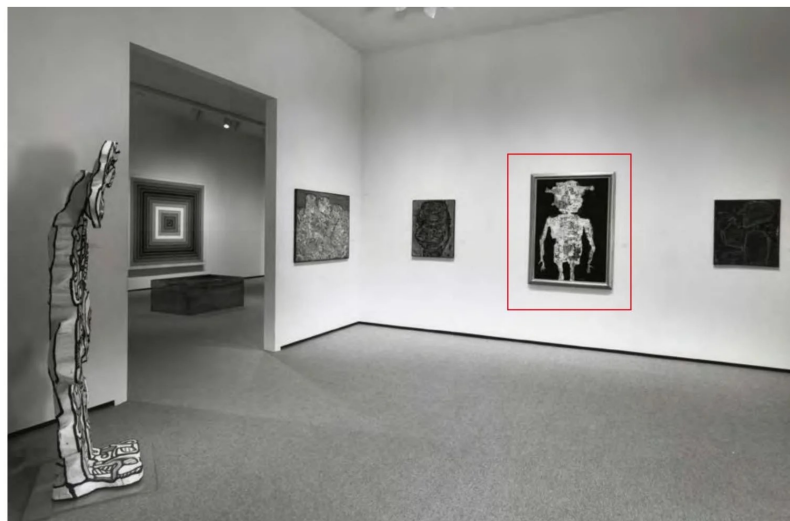
ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Chaim Soutine,  
*Carnage de bœuf*,  
1926, Minneapolis  
Museum of Art

CURRENT  
Fig. 3 The present  
work exhibited in  
The Morton G.  
Neumann Family  
Collection, Selected  
Works at the National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C.,  
1980-81

or "outsider art," as his classification for a mode of art produced by non-professionals working outside the aesthetic norm. Not unlike Picasso's derivation of inspiration from African Art at the turn of the century (see fig. 1), Dubuffet was especially drawn to so-called "primitive" art, as well as that produced by children, derelicts and sufferers of mental illness. The artist believed that these modes of visual expression were closer to the truth of the subliminal unconscious, resulting in a more realistic artistic language devoid of unnecessary aesthetic ornamentation. With a naively rendered figure, *Le Cérémonieux* reflects the tenets of Art Brut and Dubuffet's own painterly mastery through his inspired view of the world around him.

Painted during the same year as Dubuffet's notable *Vaches* paintings, *Le Cérémonieux* was included among examples from the series, as well as other important portraits from the period, in several

important exhibitions throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, including the artist's 1960-61 retrospective at Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du Louvre. *Le Cérémonieux* has only been in two collections since its creation: before Syddell Miller acquired *Le Cérémonieux* in 1998, the painting was previously owned by another midwestern cosmetics entrepreneur, Morton G. Neumann, who acquired the work directly from Pierre Matisse in 1959. Among other celebrated twentieth century works from Neumann's collection, the present painting was displayed at two major institutions, the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. in the 60s and 80s (see fig. 3). Exemplary of Dubuffet's revolutionary Art Brut style and his continuous dedication to pushing his own creative material boundaries, *Le Cérémonieux* reflects Dubuffet at the height of his artistic originality.



A LEGACY  
OF BEAUTY  
THE COLLECTION OF  
SYDELL MILLER

## II HENRI LAURENS

1885 - 1954

### LA NÉGRESSE

Inscribed twice with the monogram,  
numbered 1/6, numbered again 2 and stamped  
with the foundry mark C. Valsuani Cire Perdue

bronze

height: 29 in. 73.5 cm.

Conceived in 1934; this example cast in a  
numbered edition of 7.

\$ 900,000-1,200,000

#### PROVENANCE

Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris (acquired from the  
estate of the artist in 1955)

Private Collection

Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris (acquired in the 1970s  
and until at least 1993)

Private Collection

Galerie Daniel Malingue, Paris

Gasiunasen Gallery, Palm Beach (acquired from  
the above in 1998)

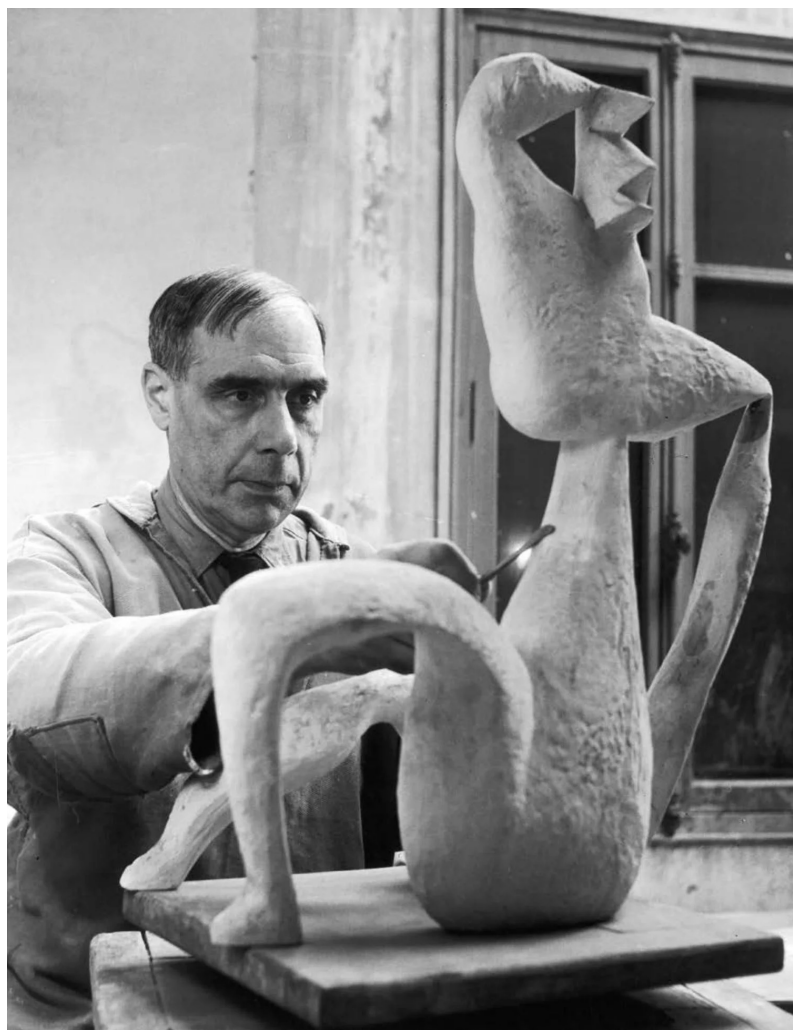
Acquired from the above in 1998 by the present  
owner

#### EXHIBITED

Lille, Musée d'Art Moderne Villeneuve-d'Ascq,  
*Henri Laurens* 1992-93, no. 78, p. 168, illustrated







omocite  
Henri Laurens in 1946.  
Photograph by  
Robert Dornau

#### LITERATURE

- Exh. Cat., Paris, Chez Marie Cuttoli, *Henri Laurens*, 1935, n.n.
- Exh. Cat., Petit Palais, *Les Maîtres de l'art indépendant*, 1937, no. 7
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Galerie Louis Carré, *Henri Laurens*, 1945, n.n.
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, *Henri Laurens*, 1951, no. 37
- Exh. Cat., Kunsthaus Zürich, *Begründer der modernen Plastik: Arp, Brancusi, Chauvin, Duchamp-Villon, Gonzalez, Laurens, Lipchitz, Pevsner*, 1954, no. 128
- Exh. Cat., Paris, *Salon de la jeune sculpture*, 1955, no. 51
- Exh. Cat., Nice, Palais de la Méditerranée, *Sculptures de Laurens, Lipchitz, Richier, Zadkine*, 1957, no. 3
- Exh. Cat., Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, *Fortegnelse over franske bøger illustreret med originalgrafik af kunstnere fra det 20. Aarhundrede*, 1956, no. 12, illustration of another cast; p. 53
- Exh. Cat., Lilje, Musée de l'Art Wallon, *Léger, Matisse, Picasso, Laurens, Miró, Magnelli, Arp, Hartung, Jacobsen*, 1958, n.n.
- Exh. Cat., Dortmund, Museum am Ostwall, *Fransösische Plastik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, 1959, no. 90
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Galerie Claude Bernard, *Henri Laurens*, 1960, no. 8, n.p., illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Kunsthaus Zürich, *Henri Laurens, Skulpturen, Collagen, Zeichnungen*, 1961, no. 83, p. 24
- Exh. Cat., Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum; Essen, Folkwang Museum and Kunsthalle Bremen, *Henri Laurens*, 1962, no. 36
- Exh. Cat., Karlsruhe, Badischer Kunstverein, *Pablo Picasso, Henri Laurens*, 1964, no. 26
- Giorgio Falcidia, *Henri Laurens*, Milan, 1966, pl. X, p. 7, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Grand Palais, *Henri Laurens, Exposition de la donation aux Musées Nationaux*, 1967, no. 42, pl. 42, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Zurich, Galerie Obere Zäune, *Henri Laurens*, 1968, n.n.
- Exh. Cat., Humlebaek, Louisiana Museum, *Henri Laurens*, 1969, no. 42
- Exh. Cat., Prague, Narodní Galerie and Brno, Bratislava, *Braque, Laurens, Picasso*, 1970, no. 42
- Werner Hofmann, *The Sculpture of Henri Laurens*, New York, 1970, pp. 152-53, illustrations of another cast; p. 238
- Exh. Cat., New York Cultural Center, *Laurens et Braque: Les Donations Laurens et Braque a L'État Français*, 1971, no. 44
- Exh. Cat., London, The Arts Council of Great Britain, *Henri Laurens, 1895-1954*, 1971, no. 55, n.p., illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Luxembourg, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire and Metz, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, *Henri Laurens*, 1971, no. 17
- Exh. Cat., Bielefeld, Kunsthalle, *Henri Laurens, Plastiken, Graphiken, Zeichnungen*, 1972, no. 9
- Exh. Cat., Rome, Accademia di Francia, *Henri Laurens*, 1980-81, no. 39, p. 75, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Marq en Baroeul, Fondation Anne et Albert Prouvost, *Henri Laurens*, 1982, no. 23, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Kunstmuseum Bern, *25 Jahre Hermann und Margrit Rupp Stiftung im Kunstmuseum*, 1985, p. 115
- Peter Winter, "Skulptur, die atmet," *Weltkunst*, 1985, p. 2545
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Galerie Louise Leiris, *Henri Laurens, 1895-1954*, 1985, no. 25, pl. 36, illustration in color of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Kunstmuseum Bern and Munich, Museum Villa Stuck, *Henri Laurens, 1895-1954*, 1985, no. 57, p. 128, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Hannover, Sprengel Museum, *Henri Laurens, (1895-1954), Skulpturen, Collage, Zeichnungen, Aquarelle, Druckgraphik*, 1985, no. 43, p. 103, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, *Qu'est-ce que la sculpture Moderne?*, 1987, no. 233
- Exh. Cat., Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Henri Laurens*, 1987, no. 6, illustration of another cast
- Exh. Cat., Barcelona, Musée Picasso, *Henri Laurens, Escultures i Dibuxos*, 1989, no. 89
- Exh. Cat., Château de Biron, *Henri Laurens*, 1990, no. 23, illustration of another cast



Replete with voluminous forms and asserting a compelling presence, *La Négresse*, conceived in 1934, is an elegant paragon of Henri Laurens' pivotal stylistic evolution in the wake of World War I that would come to define the sculptor's mature output. Esteemed for his Cubist constructions of 1915-19, which fragmented conventional forms into strikingly geometricized planes, Laurens—like his peers Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, Juan Gris and Georges Braque—reacted to the upheaval of World War I by in part renouncing their avant-garde advancements and embracing more enduring cultural referents, such as antiquity, in a broader cultural shift known as *Le rappel à l'ordre*, or the return to order (see figs. 3 and 4). In classicized renderings of femininity, Laurens'

sharp-edged configurations expanded into rounded, voluptuous forms that privileged a formal unity. This tendency became increasingly accentuated throughout the 1920s and reached its apex by 1932-33, when the artist divided his time between Paris and the nearby hamlet of Etang-La-Ville. Perhaps reflective of inspiration found in the lyrical female nudes of his neighbor, Aristide Maillol, the present work exudes a self-assured, luxuriant sensuality (see fig. 1). The flowing shapes and serpentine curves that so enthralled Laurens also hold strong affinity with the work of Henri Matisse, who adapted a greater stylization into his portrayals of the human body during this period. "Incidentally, the early thirties were a period of looking backward for Matisse just as they were for Laurens," describes Werner Hofmann,

ABOVE  
Fig. 1 Aristide Maillol,  
*La Montagne*,  
premier état, 1936-37.  
Private Collection

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 2 Henri Matisse,  
*Venus à la coquille*,  
I, 1930. Private  
Collection, Sold  
Sotheby's,  
New York, 2 November  
2011, lot 36 for  
\$1.3 million

"In 1931 Matisse began his great frieze *La Danse*, with which he abandoned his mundane hedonism of the 1920s and found a generous, arabesque rhythm for the moving body" (Werner Hofmann, *The Sculpture of Henri Laurens*, New York, 1970, pp. 42-43; see fig. 2).

Laurens nevertheless remained adherent to an abstract idiom, with his Cubist penchant for compositional deconstruction and recombination manifested in the contrasted angularity and curvaceousness within the present work. Energized zigzags of hair, triangular breasts and a sharpened nose flawlessly counterpoise the swell of the figure's lower back and undulations of her arms, endowing her with a rhythmic vitality. Elizabeth Cowling elaborates, "The first clear sign of a new orientation in Laurens' work had occurred in 1919, in the more voluptuous and relaxed forms of *Woman with a Fan* and in subsequent related reclining nudes. In these,

curves multiply, forms are more volumetric, and there is a general softening of mood—although the break-up of the body into large areas, which are then juxtaposed against one another at different angles, betrays the continuing role of Laurens' Cubist style" (Exh. Cat., London, Tate Gallery, *On Classic Ground, Picasso, Léger, De Chirico and the New Classicism 1910-30*, 1990, p. 130). *La Négresse* underscores Laurens' firm commitment—spanning markedly different aesthetic modes—to conveying the formal essence of his subjects.

Integral to Laurens' ceaseless stylistic evolution was his mastery of widely varied media: abandoning the metal, paper and wood of his Cubist assemblages in favor of terracotta and limestone by 1919, the artist devoted himself to bronze by the end of the following decade. Photographer Brassai recalled upon a visit to Laurens' studio in 1933, "Bronze, a more supple







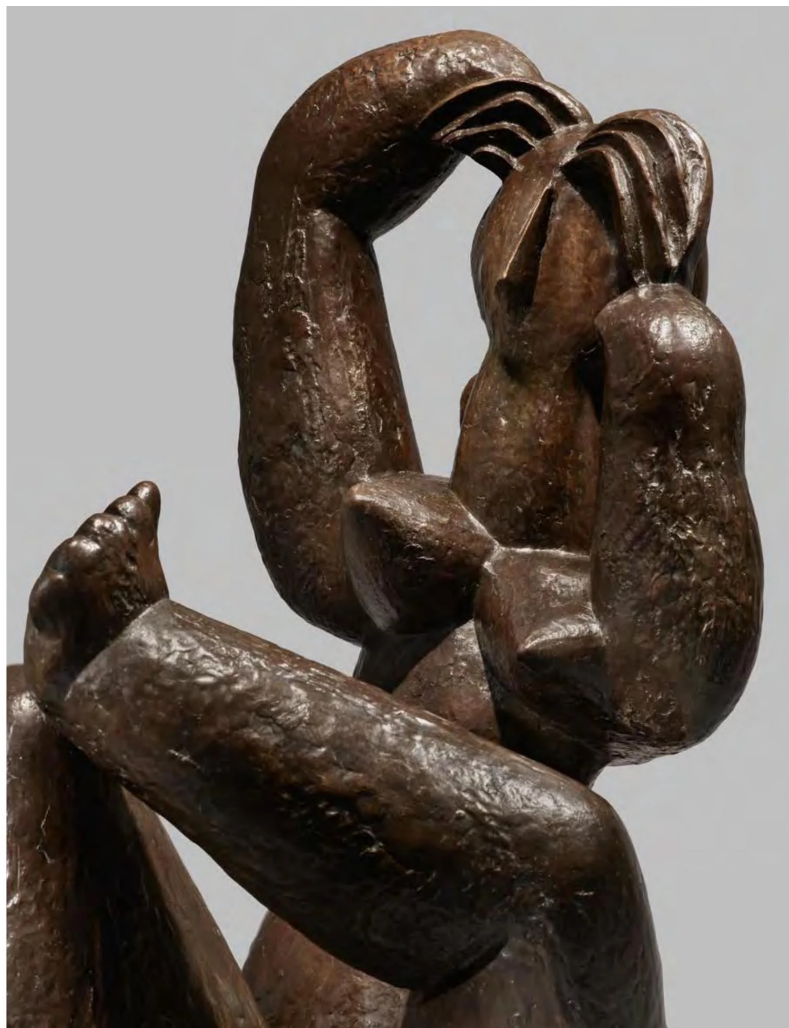
and malleable medium than stone, had permitted him to be more daring, to move away from a static geometric Cubism consisting entirely of angles and toward a more dynamic and plastic lyricism created by rounded shapes and undulating lines" (quoted in Exh. Cat., The Hague, Museum Beelden aan Zee, *De Grote Curve, Henri Laurens, 1885-1954*, 2014, p. 51).

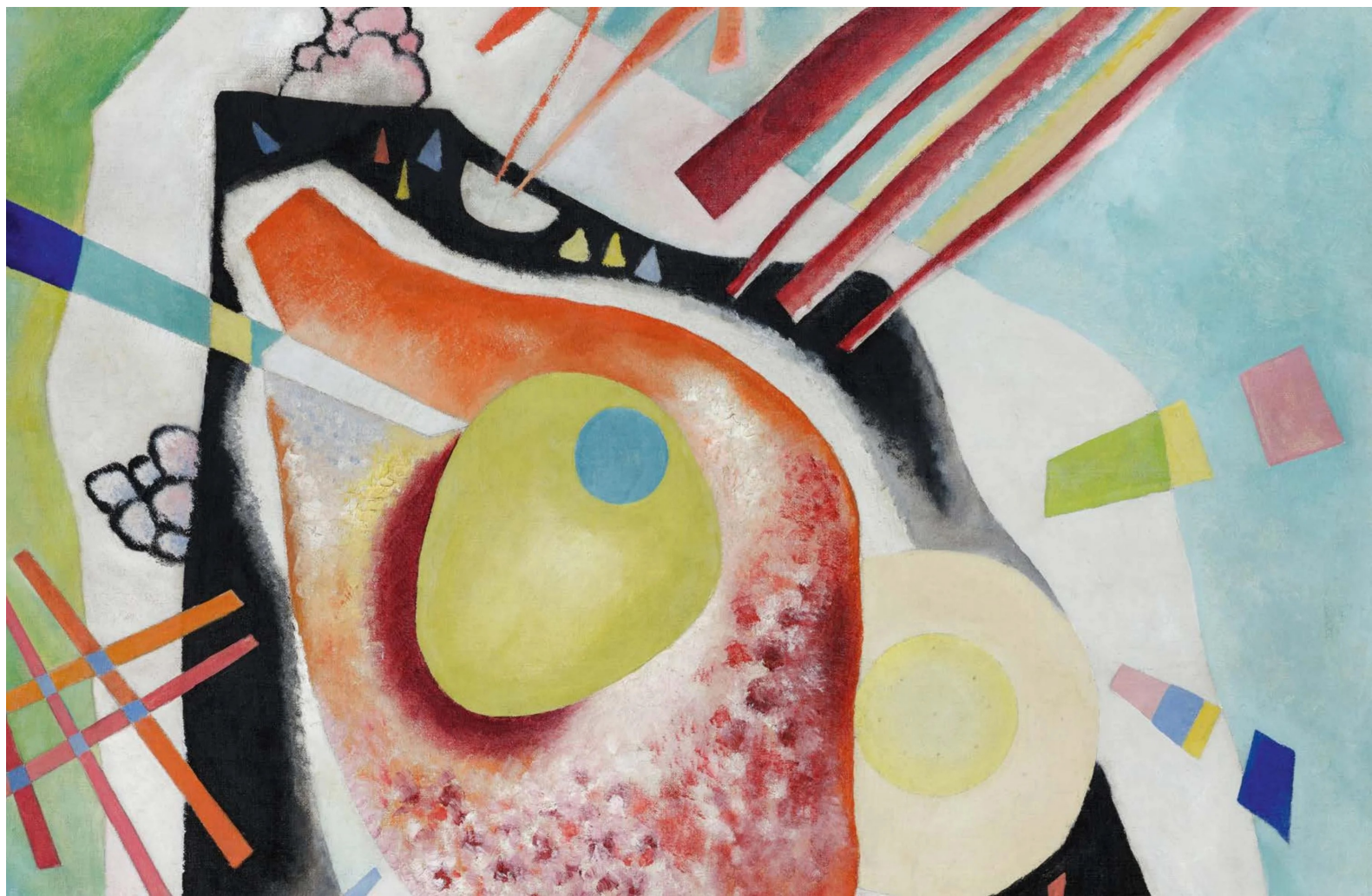
The lush environs of Etang-La-Ville encouraged Laurens to adopt not only a stronger affiliation with the natural world and its organic forms, but also a deeply instinctive sculptural process that endured for the remainder of his career. Laurens later recalled, "When I begin a sculpture, I only have a vague idea of what I want to do. For instance, I have the idea of a woman or of something related to the sea. Before being a representation of whatever it may be, my sculpture is a plastic act and, more precisely, a series of plastic events, products of my imagination, answers to the demands of the making. I provide a title right at the end" (quoted in "Une déclaration de Henri Laurens," *Amis de l'Art*, vol. 1, 26 June 1951, n.p.). Daily walks in the Forêt de Marly surrounding the town informed his ideations, here revealed in the figure's hewn texture, warm patina and undulating, trunklike arms that culminate in branching fingers.

With volume and weight attentively balanced, the assertive yet elegant pose of *La Nègresse* manifests Laurens' lifelong investigation of interactions between sculpture and environment. "Essentially sculpture means taking possession of a space," the artist proclaimed, "the construction of an object by means of hollows and volumes, fullness and voids; their alterations, their contrasts, their constant and reciprocal tension, and in final form, their equilibrium" (quoted in Andrew Ritchie, *Sculpture of the Twentieth Century*, New York, 1953, p. 43). The fleshy amplitude of forms asserts a strong corporeality, resulting in an extraordinarily tangible and dynamic sense of the three-dimensional in the present work. As the artist affirmed, "I strive for the ripeness of form. I should like to succeed in making it so full, so juicy, that nothing more could be added" (quoted in Exh. Cat., London, The Arts Council of Great Britain, *Henri Laurens*, 1971, p. 19). Other casts of the present work belong to prestigious museum collections including the Centre Pompidou, Paris and the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.

TOP  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
*Les Femmes d'Alger*  
sur un rocher, 1921,  
The Museum of Modern  
Art, New York

BOTTOM  
Fig. 4 Fernand Léger,  
*Femme à genoux*, 1921,  
Art Gallery of Ontario,  
Toronto







## 12 WASSILY KANDINSKY

1867 - 1944

### WEISSES OVAL (WHITE OVAL)

signed with the monogram and dated 21  
(lower left); signed again with the monogram,  
dated 1921, and inscribed No. 239,  
(on the reverse)

oil on canvas

41 1/4 by 39 1/4 in. 105.7 by 100.6 cm.

Executed in 1921.

\$ 15,000,000-20,000,000

#### PROVENANCE

The artist (until at least 1926)  
Nierendorf Gallery, New York (acquired by 1937;  
possibly acquired directly from the artist in 1926)  
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York  
(acquired from the above in January 1945)  
Sotheby's Parke-Bernet, New York, 20 October  
1971, lot 12 (consigned by the above)  
Private Collection, Milan (acquired at the above sale)  
Matthiesen Gallery, London  
Thomas Ammann Fine Art, Zurich; Galerie Beyeler,  
Basel and Carlo Bilotti, Rome (acquired jointly  
from the above in May 1988)  
Galerie Urban, Tokyo (acquired from the above in  
June 1988)  
Private Collection, Tokyo (acquired from the above  
in September 1999)  
Landau Fine Art, Montreal (acquired in April 2000)  
Acquired from the above in 2000 by the  
present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Berlin, Galerie Goldschmidt-Wallerstein,  
*Kandinsky*, 1922  
Munich, Moderne Galerie Thannhauser,  
*W. Kandinsky*, 1922, no. 6  
Stockholm, Gummesons Konsthandel, *Kandinsky*,  
1922, no. 8  
Hanover, Kestner-Gesellschaft, 1923  
Dresden, Galerie Neue Kunst Fides, 1924  
Wiesbaden, Neues Museum, Nassauischer  
Kunstverein und Wiesbadener Gesellschaft für  
bildende Kunst, *Wassili Kandinsky*, 1925, no. 1  
Barmen, Ruhmeshalle; Bochum, Gemäldegalerie  
and Düsseldorf, Galerie Nierendorf, *Gemälde,  
Aquarelle und grafische Arbeiten*, 1925  
Dresden, Galerie Arnold and Berlin, Galerie  
Neumann und Nierendorf, *Kandinsky Jubiläums-  
Ausstellung zum 60. Geburtstage*, 1926, no. 13  
(titled *Mit Weisses Oval*)





"COLOR IS THE KEYBOARD. THE EYE IS THE HAMMER, WHILE THE SOUL IS A PIANO OF MANY STRINGS. THE ARTIST IS THE HAND THROUGH WHICH THE MEDIUM OF DIFFERENT KEYS CAUSES THE HUMAN SOUL TO VIBRATE."

- WASSILY KANDINSKY, *ON THE SPIRITUAL IN ART*, NEW YORK, 1946, P. 42

New York, Nierendorf Gallery; Cleveland Museum of Art and Cambridge, The Germanic Museum, Harvard University. *Kandinsky: A Retrospective View*, 1937, no. 20 (titled *Composition 239*)

New York, Nierendorf Gallery. *Works by Kandinsky: A Retrospective Show*, 1942-43, n.n.

New York, Museum of Non-Objective Paintings. *Kandinsky Memorial Exhibition*, 1945, no. 42, p. 105  
Boston, Institute of Contemporary Art; Cleveland Museum of Art; New York, M. Knoedler and Co. Inc; San Francisco Museum of Art and Minneapolis, Walker Art Center. *Kandinsky Retrospective*, 1952, no. 31 (Boston); no. 32 (Minneapolis)

Los Angeles, University of California, 1953-54 (on extended loan)

Atlanta, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1954-55 (on extended loan)

Sioux Falls, Augustana College, 1955-56 (on extended loan)

Albuquerque, University of New Mexico, 1956-57 (on extended loan)

Towson, Goucher College, 1958 (on extended loan)

San Antonio, Witte Memorial Museum, 1958-59 (on extended loan)

Greencastle, DePauw University, 1959-60 (on extended loan)

Delaware, Ohio Wesleyan University, 1960 (on extended loan)

New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. *Kandinsky, Klee, Feininger: 3 Bauhaus Painters*, 1970, n.n.

Museum of Albuquerque. *American Portrait*, 1977

New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Kunsthaus Zürich. *Kandinsky: Russian and Bauhaus Years, 1915-1933, 1983-84*, no. 40, p. 24; p. 116, illustrated (New York); no. 33, p. 22; p. 98, illustrated (Zurich)

Washington, D.C., The Phillips Collection and New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. *Kandinsky and the Harmony of Silence: Painting with White Border*, 2011-12, p. 37; pl. 43, p. 102, illustrated in color; p. 128

#### LITERATURE

The artist's handlist II, no. 239

Henry S. Francis, "A Retrospective Exhibition of Wassily Kandinsky," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, vol. 39, no. 9, November 1952, p. 228

"Kandinsky: Pioneer Non-Objectivist in a New Context," *The Art Digest*, vol. 26, no. 12, 15 March 1952, p. 12, illustrated

Will Grohmann, *Wassily Kandinsky, Life and Work*, New York, 1958, no. 131, p. 360, illustrated; p. 334

Hans K. Roethel and Jean K. Benjamin, *Kandinsky: Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings, 1916-1944*, vol. II, Ithaca, 1984, no. 660, p. 635, illustrated

Annegret Hoberg, Victor Swooboda and Robert Landau, *Murnau: The Birthplace of Abstract Expressionism*, Montreal, 2023, p. 138, illustrated





**BELOW**  
Fig. 1 Wassily  
Kandinsky, *Museum mit  
Kirche II* (Museum with  
Church II), 1910. Private  
Collection. Sold:  
Sotheby's, London,  
1 March 2023, lot 115  
for \$372 million.

**OPPOSITE**  
Wassily Kandinsky in  
his studio in Neuilly-  
sur-Seine in front of  
Courbe d'ensemble,  
1938. Photograph by  
Bernard Lipitzky.

Kandinsky's transformative artistic vision.

Like many of his contemporaries working in Russia in the latter half of the 1910s, Kandinsky was deeply influenced by the principles of Suprematism. Founded by Kazimir Malevich, and based on the notion of the supremacy of pure feeling in the pictorial arts, Suprematism rejected nature in favor of a geometric abstraction reduced to its most fundamental form (see fig. 3). Kandinsky's own theories on art were based on his tangential notion of an "innermost necessity", communicated between artist and viewer through the perceptual effects engendered by different pairings of shape and color. Kandinsky contended that colors carry inherent psychological effects which can be heightened or diminished when articulated within certain shapes, which also bear innate perceptual

qualities. His insistence on non-objectivity—of a reduction of shape to its most essential form—is to remove from representation any obligation to an object beyond itself, so that those pairings can be read without the emotional meaning we attach to figurative painting. The art object and the arrangement of its formal elements thus become a means for universal, subliminal communication.

As Kandinsky states in his seminal 1912 text, *On the Spiritual in Art*, "In any case of translation into the abstract or the employment of non-objective forms, the artist's sole judge, guide, and principal consideration should be his feeling. ... Since art affects feeling, it can only be effective through feeling" (Wassily Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, Munich, 1912 (New York, 1946 reprint), p. 58). The



**R**endered with all of the chromatic exuberance of his esteemed early Expressionism and the geometric fortitude of his greatest Bauhaus experiments, *Weisses Oval* is a celebration of Wassily Kandinsky's lifelong fascination with the relationship between color and form. In his careful juxtaposition of rudimentary and invented shapes, of warm tones and cool, and of inward movement with radial expansion, the canvas is brought to life through pictorial idiosyncrasies. As such, the work testifies to Kandinsky's ceaseless interest in the psychological and perceptual effects of different combinations of formal elements within a composition. Executed in

1921, one of the last three paintings he made while living in Russia, *Weisses Oval* marks an important moment of self-determination within the evolution of Kandinsky's altogether singular style. In December of the same year, Kandinsky moved from Moscow to Berlin, in part at the invitation to teach at the Bauhaus by its founder Walter Gropius, and also on account of his ideological differences with the increasingly Constructivist leanings of the Russian avant-garde. In the face of mounting challenges to his artistic principles from his Russian peers, and on the cusp of a new pedagogical tilt to his practice, *Weisses Oval* stands as a beautifully articulated declaration of



key difference and ultimately point of departure between Kandinsky's beliefs and those of the Russian avant-garde was precisely this contention: that, even when reduced to its purest form, shape and color still carried expressive content. This rift became increasingly apparent in and around 1921, when Constructivism, which emphasized rational construction and a reduction of material, shape and color to its essential form for the purpose of utility, came to the fore as the dominant train of artistic thought among the Russian institutions of which Kandinsky was a part. Kandinsky's insistence on the importance of intuition to the process of composition constituted his point of dissent.

The crystallization of his personal style with *Weisses Oval* is aptly visualized through comparison to the earlier *Rotes Oval*, which at the time in 1920, likewise served as a conscious statement of his developing artistic principles (see fig. 4). In *Rotes Oval*, Kandinsky introduces the general compositional elements which are streamlined in the present work. Burnished of their expressionist fluidity and sharpened so that each form can be read as its own distinct geometric element, the centralized composition of overlapping planes is here articulated with a much more clearly established spatial sequence. In their layering, Kandinsky accentuates the sensation that the arrangement as a whole defies the laws of natural gravity, an impulse which was crucial to his larger aspiration towards non-objectivity. Set against the richly modulated teal background, and superimposed with a variety of idiosyncratic forms, *Weisses Oval* therefore becomes both a literal and perceptual manifestation of his formal theories.

While the composition is enlivened by the interplay of these various elements, Kandinsky's interest in the behavior of the titular white oval, situated at center left, refocuses the viewer's attention on precisely this correspondence between form and color. The choice of yellow and blue as dominant colors within the composition allowed the artist further exploration into his postulations on



ABOVE  
Fig. 2 Robert Delaunay,  
*Rythme circulaire*, 1921  
Private Collection, Sotheby's, London,  
March 2003, lot 121 for  
\$8.6 million

OPPOSITE TOP  
Fig. 3 Kazimir  
Malevich, *Suprematist  
Composition*, 1916,  
Private Collection,  
Sotheby's, New York,  
March 2003, lot 1 for  
\$60 million

OPPOSITE BOTTOM  
Fig. 4 Wassily  
Kandinsky, *Rotes  
Oval* (Red Oval),  
1920, The Solomon R.  
Guggenheim Museum,  
New York

the behavior of warm and cold tones. Warm colors, like yellow, move towards the spectator, striving to reach them, while cold colors, like blue, retreat away from them. In the careful layering of these different tonalities, Kandinsky creates an inherently dynamic oscillation. Within the closed circuit of the canvas, the viewer to *Weisses Oval* is caught between the push and pull of the blue layered on yellow, layered on blue. The addition of the radial diagonal lines introduces a rotational quality that likewise heightens the tension between concentric and eccentric movement. Like a spring, these different forms project and recoil from the surface, kindling an activated, psychologically engaged mode of viewership. This conception of color

as having both intrinsic and incidental properties which communicate experiential effects finds kinship in the earlier *Oprhist* movement. With an emphasis on the sensory and the intuitive, the movement's leaders Robert and Sonia Delaunay utilized careful chromatic harmonies and radiating forms to give visual shape to universal energies (see fig. 2). As in the present work, their musical arrangements present the effects of color as transcendent of the two dimensional picture plane.

The rhythmic cadence of the composition in *Weisses Oval* foreshadows the developments which, in 1922, would come to serve as the basis for his curriculum at the Bauhaus. The stippled



Fig. 5 The present work  
exhibited in Kandinsky  
Memorial Exhibition  
at the Museum of  
Non-Objective Painting,  
New York, 1922

"THAT IS TO BE CONSIDERED BEAUTIFUL  
WHICH RESULTS FROM AN INNER SPIRITUAL  
NEED, AS ONLY THAT WHICH IS SPIRITUAL  
CAN BE BEAUTIFUL."

- WASSILY KANDINSKY, *ON THE SPIRITUAL IN ART*, MUNICH, 1912 (NEW YORK, 1946 REPRINT), P. 95



application of paint in the red forms, and the subtle gradation of white into black stand as some of the last examples of this modulated effect in his work before its transition to an opaque, strictly geometric idiom. During his eleven year tenure at the school, Kandinsky expounded on the visual effects of these formal relationships in his theories on correspondence. Based on the phenomena of synesthesia, whereby experiences of one sense faculty affect another, the concept of correspondence led to an increasingly streamlined exploration into the relationship between color and form. Just two years later, his work would already come to bear the signs of this new construction. *Composition 8*, for example, has a much stronger emphasis along the horizontal axis—rather than along a third axis protruding out from the surface towards the viewer—as if the centrally arranged forms in *Weisses Oval* were carefully dispersed across the canvas (see fig. 7). Kandinsky's pioneering exploration into the behavior of line, shape and color would come to serve as a

prescient forerunner to the evolution of abstraction, an influence particularly felt in the Color Field and later Minimalist movements. Kenneth Noland's iconic use of the echoed chevron motif, animated and explored through careful color arrangements, is poised as a notable part of this lineage (see fig. 6).

Since its execution in 1921, *Weisses Oval* has been regarded as one of the formative examples of this pivotal moment in Kandinsky's artistic career. Exhibited in the sequence of important early exhibitions of the artist's work, it also featured prominently in his seminal retrospectives, including the 1945 *Memorial Exhibition* at New York's Museum of Non-Objective Paintings, and the 1952 *Kandinsky Retrospective* which traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, the (then) San Francisco Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art, among other prestigious American institutions (see fig. 5). The work was likewise acquired by New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 1945, one of the most prestigious lines of provenance a work by

ABOVE:  
Fig. 6 Kenneth Noland,  
*Trans Shift*, 1964.  
The Solomon R.  
Guggenheim Museum,  
New York

OPPOSITE:  
Fig. 7 Wassily  
Kandinsky, *Composition 8*  
(*Composition 8*),  
1929. The Solomon R.  
Guggenheim Museum,  
New York



“TO SEE IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF HARMONIOUS TASTE, BUT IS ONE OF EFFECT ON THE OTHER SENSES.”

— WASSILY KANDINSKY, *ON THE SPIRITUAL IN ART*, MUNICH, 1912 (NEW YORK, 1946 REPRINT), P. 42

Kandinsky can bear. The same year, *Weisses Oval* was exhibited in their memorial exhibition organized after the artist's death in 1944. An important part of the Guggenheim's original holdings, which constitutes one of the most prolific institutional collections of the artist's work, *Weisses Oval* played a central role in their comprehensive retelling of Kandinsky's oeuvre. More broadly, however, its acquisition was an important part of a trailblazing effort by Solomon R. Guggenheim to curate a definitive collection of what he termed 'non-objective' art. Kandinsky's work remains a pivotal touchstone in the museum's ongoing efforts to explicate the central importance of abstraction within

the evolution of the modern canon, most recently serving as the focus of a 2022 retrospective, *Wassily Kandinsky: Around the Circle*. Guggenheim saw in this art of non-objectivity a timelessness, a universal resonance, which Kandinsky sought to harness from the beginning of his artistic project: "This objective will give the creative work of today the possibility in the future, to proclaim 'I am' instead of 'I was'" (Wassily Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, Munich, 1912 (New York, 1946 reprint), p. 90). The contemporary pervasiveness of the artistic theory expounded in works like *Weisses Oval* attests to Kandinsky's fulfillment of that revolutionary aspiration.



## 13 JUAN GRIS

1888 - 1927

### CARAFE ET PIPE

signed Juan Gris, dated 9-1917 and  
inscribed Paris (lower right)  
oil on panel

24 by 15 in. 61 by 38 cm.

Executed in September 1917.

\$ 1,200,000-1,800,000

#### PROVENANCE

Galerie L'Effort Moderne (Léonce Rosenberg),  
Paris  
Dr. Gottlieb Friedrich Reber, Lausanne (probably  
acquired from the above)  
Dr. Ingeborg Pudenko-Eichmann, Florence and  
Zurich (probably acquired from the above by 1955  
and until at least 1974)  
Private Collection, Switzerland  
Galerie Art Focus, Zurich  
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago (acquired from  
the above in 2000)  
Acquired from the above in 2001 by the  
present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Kunstmuseum Bern, *Juan Gris*, 1955-56, no. 47  
Paris, Orangerie des Tuileries, *Juan Gris*, 1974,  
no. 63, p. 95, illustrated (titled *Nature morte*)  
Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, *Juan Gris*, 1974, no. 50,  
n.p., illustrated

#### LITERATURE

Gotthard Jedlicka, *Macht der Farbe in der Malerei  
des XX. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart, 1962, pl. 38,  
illustrated (titled *Stilleben*)  
Giulia Veronesi, *L'Arte Moderna*, vol. VI, Milan,  
1967, p. 397; p. 16, illustrated in color (titled *Natura  
morta*)  
Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, *Juan Gris: His Life and  
Work*, New York, 1969, p. 273, illustrated; p. 316  
Douglas Cooper, *Juan Gris: Catalogue raisonné  
de l'oeuvre peint*, vol. I, Paris, 1977, no. 231  
pp. 340-41, illustrated  
Dorothy Kosinski, "G.F. Reber: Collector of  
Cubism," *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 133,  
no. 1061, August 1991, p. 529  
Andrea Pophanken and Felix Billeter, *Die  
Moderne und ihre Sammler: Französische Kunst  
in Deutschem Privatbesitz, vom Kaiserreich zur  
Weimarer Republik*, Berlin, 2001, no. 19, p. 395





"[FOR GRIS,] STILL LIFE WAS  
NOT A SEDUCTION, IT WAS A RELIGION."

— GERTRUDE STEIN, *PICASSO*, NEW YORK, 1984, P. 13

Executed in 1917, *Carafe et pipe* exemplifies Juan Gris' distinct understanding of the cubist still life as the synthesis of the object with its painted representation. Exemplary of Gris' synthetic approach to the style, the present work communicates an equal reverence for his starting point within the natural world and its present abstraction on the canvas. As geometric planes of acid green, rich earth-toned browns and stark black float atop one another, in a composition that is at once static and enlivened with the verve of a Parisian café, Gris reconceives of the central bottle and pipe as both formal and figurative elements within the work. Averse to any symbolism beyond the feelings an object evoked within him, Gris here adopts a beautifully simplified and metaphorical mode of communication—one in which shape, color and line are given the same integrity as the forms and qualities of light they describe. Rendered in his inimitable chromatic palette, with a tangibility and clarity of formal articulation exemplary of the artist's decided hand, *Carafe et pipe* is a luminous example

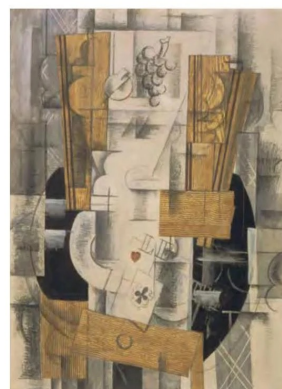
of the late 1910s canvases which would seed the evolution of his mature output.

The namesake carafe and pipe are mainstays in a lexicon of beloved still life motifs which Gris and his cubist contemporaries returned to with a religious devotion. Yet, when described as they are in the present work—irrevocably flattened and essentially reduced to blocks of unmodulated color—Gris presents the objects through an entirely new inflection. Very early in his foray into Cubism, Gris distinguished himself among the three founders of the movement precisely on account of his concern for the construction of form, rather than the evocation of it. A comparison of his earlier 1913 canvas, *Bouteille de rhum et journal* (see fig. 2) with Georges Braque's contemporaneous *Nature morte (plat de fruits, as de trèfle)* (see fig. 1), testifies to that determined independence. The synthetic aims of Gris' work are perhaps best articulated by the artist himself: "Cézanne made a cylinder out of a bottle. I start from the cylinder to create a special kind of individual object. I make a bottle out of a cylinder" (quoted

ABOVE  
Juan Gris and his wife,  
Joseette Gris, in 1922

OPPOSITE LEFT  
Fig. 1 Georges Braque,  
*Nature morte (plat de  
fruits, as de trèfle)*,  
1913, Centre Pompidou,  
Paris

OPPOSITE RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Juan Gris,  
*Bouteille de rhum  
et journal*, 1913-14,  
Tate Gallery, London



in Exh. Cat., New York, Museum of Modern Art and traveling, *Juan Gris*, 1958, p. 9). Beautifully exemplified in the present work, as shapes are transformed into their nominative counterparts, Gris' was a project of communicating his subjects through facsimile of form, and of communicating form through the delineations of space as demarcated by color. Ultimately, spatial depth is then fabricated through the careful layering of these planes atop the two dimensions of the canvas' surface. It is his acuity to the behavior of these various elements layered on top of one another to mimic the eye's response to three dimensional volume which makes his dialect of cubism so distinct.

As testament to the depth Gris is here able to achieve within the confines of the painted surface, his geometric planes bear a striking resemblance to the angular projections which comprise Umberto Boccioni's 1913 bronze, *Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio*. Though there is no explicit influence between Gris and the Futurists, his present use of multi-directional lines and angles as a means of conveying the relationship between objects in space finds kinship in the Futurists' use of force lines

to communicate movement. Boccioni emulates the namesake "development" through an implied centrifugal motion, so that the bottle appears to be formed at center as the rest of the sculpture spins around it. But Gris' objective was unsullied by any concern for external elements, like speed or velocity, beyond the forms themselves. It was not a matter of visualizing the object's internal and external spatial planes simultaneously so much as it was a project of collapsing those planes into flattened, two dimensional geometry.

1917 is regarded as a watershed moment in the trajectory of Gris' artistic development, marking the point at which he arrived at what Daniel Henry Kahnweiler referred to as the artist's "architectural" period. In terms that describe the present work as aptly as they do this broader stylistic shift, Kahnweiler elaborates on the characteristics of Gris' new cubist approach: "Stately and firm, his paintings had become the 'flat colored architecture' of which he talked. Everything was restored to the flat surface; the objects inscribed thereon were emblems which he invented, true 'concepts.' He abandoned





multiple descriptions of objects. Line and color were more closely associated, for his preoccupation with 'local' color apparently diminished. The emblems themselves rise on above the other architecturally, and they are controlled by the general structure, which causes their 'distortion' and 'discoloration.' It might almost be more accurate to say that it is the architecture—the whole construction—that governs their form and their color." (*ibid.*, p. 61)

What makes the architectural quality of the present work so captivating is its application to the still life genre, and the distinctly commonplace motifs and interior which Gris takes as his subject. This preoccupation with compositional order and structure was shared by his contemporary, Fernand Léger, in whose work, however, it describes corresponding motifs of the city and machine (see fig. 3). When, as here, applied to a glass or pipe, the objectivity of this

construction communicates the artist's reverence for their inherent materiality. As Maurice Raynal eloquently observes: "Juan Gris guides his many-sided sensibility toward surrounding things, just as other direct theirs toward the heavens or the mirror; he thus invites us to take part in an intimate communion with the very essence of the objects he proposes to paint" (*ibid.*, p. 28). The architectural solidity of the whole composition is likewise heightened by his ability to render qualities of light with the same solidity of form as he does the objects themselves. *Carafe et pipe* is a remarkable articulation of Gris' enduring interest in the counterplay between forms and their shadows. Whereas in other cubist compositions, shadows are either described through tonal gradation or omitted entirely, Gris upholds the integrity of the shadow as its own entity. Shadows are here articulated through the careful repetition of shapes which, when placed

above:  
Fig. 3 Fernand Léger,  
*Nature morte (2e état)*,  
1919. Private Collection

opposite:  
Fig. 4 Le Corbusier,  
*Nature morte verticale*,  
1922. Kunstmuseum  
Basel

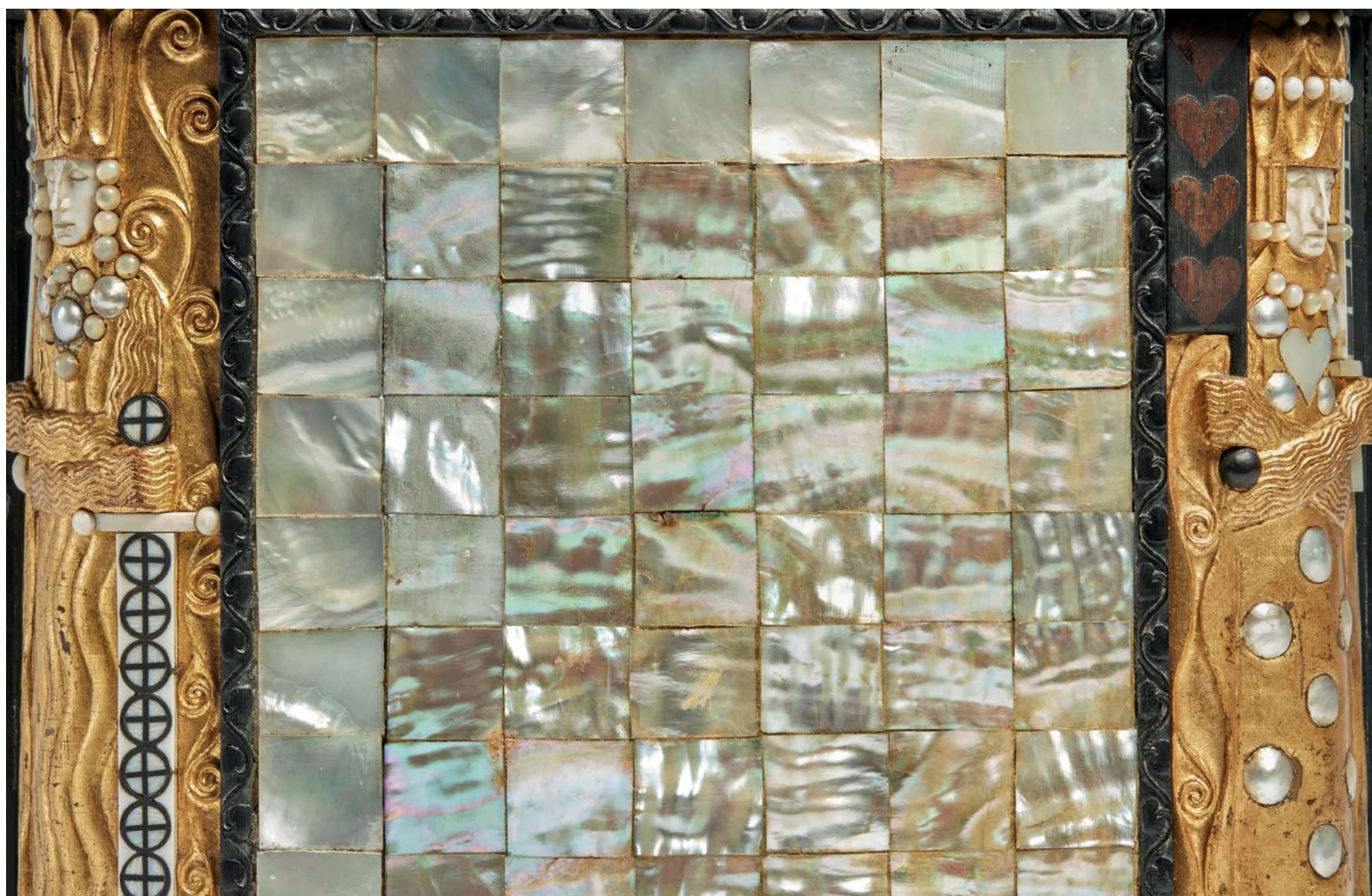
## "I TRY TO MAKE CONCRETE THAT WHICH IS ABSTRACT."

— JUAN GRIS IN *L'ESPRIT NOUVEAU*, NO. 5

next to one another, appear like an echo of the object itself. Opaque and unflinchingly rendered, his use of thick, unmodulated black makes overt the translation of the ephemeral into the material. The effect is most apparent here in the bottle, as the curvilinear shape of its neck is precisely mirrored in the black element directly to its left. The decorative motifs are likewise evoked through this handling of light. In his simple layering of the geometric, acid-green detailing over a band of dark brown, Gris emulates the effect of the shadow cast by an ornate molding carved in low relief.

This preoccupation with communicating an object through its essential, or rather, essentialized elements serves as a prophetic precursor to the revolutions in aesthetics which would come to bear at the hand of Le Corbusier and the proprietors of the Purist movement just a few years later in the 1920s. Purism reduced subject matter to the relationships of its geometric angles and shapes, further emphasized through color toward a unified effect. These "pure" forms were composed of their intrinsic qualities and absent of any representational meaning. This infiltrated all aspects of the arts including painting, design, and architecture. As such, the construction of form and space within *Carafe et pipe* lends itself to comparison with a painting by Le Corbusier (see fig. 4) as readily as it does to one of his ingenious architectural structures. In the context of Le Corbusier's writing, in the present work, form follows function in the sense that form is reduced to exclusively that which is necessary to *communicate* function. And so Gris arrives at a cubist mode which takes a revolutionary leap from the otherwise daunting precedent set by his peers within the movement at the time, and it is precisely the brazen declaration of pictorial aims articulated in *Carafe et pipe* which established the artist as an independent pillar of the style.







14

JOSEF HOFFMANN  
1870 - 1956  
CARL OTTO CZESCHKA  
1878 - 1960

UNIQUE AND IMPORTANT  
SPIELKARTENKASSETTE  
(CARD CASE), DESIGNED  
FOR KARL WITTGENSTEIN

Impressed WIENER/WERK/STÄTTE and  
with Czeschka's cypher

brass, gilt bronze, mother of pearl,  
macassar ebony and ivory

7 by 8 1/4 by 8 1/4 in.  
17.8 by 21 by 21 cm.

Executed circa 1907 by the Wiener Werkstätte,  
Vienna, Austria

• \$ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Karl Wittgenstein, Vienna, commissioned directly  
from the artist

Thence by descent to Margaret Stonborough-  
Wittgenstein, Vienna and New York

Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 4 March 1949,  
lot 505

Private Collection, New York

Private Collection, Europe

Philippe Denys Gallery, Brussels

Acquired from the above by the present owner  
circa 2000





"ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DUO'S YEARSLONG COLLABORATIVE PURSUITS, THE CARD CASE CAPTURES THE WIENER WERKSTÄTTE'S INSISTENCE ON CREATING A TOTAL WORK OF ART IN ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR CRAFT."

The present work, an exquisitely crafted Card Case (Spielkartenkassette) designed by the leader of the Wiener Werkstätte Josef Hoffmann and his eminent associate Carl Otto Czeschka for one of the movement's primary patrons Karl Wittgenstein, thoroughly encapsulates the avant-garde impulses of Viennese craft at the turn of the twentieth century. Designed alongside a Games Table made for Wittgenstein that was likely part of a commission for his palace residence in Vienna, the present work exemplifies the meticulous craftsmanship and attention to fine detail that the Wiener Werkstätte championed, clad in sumptuous materials and carved to perfection. Not only were the Games Table and Card Case displayed together at the showroom of the Wiener Werkstätte in Vienna, the present Card Case was one of the select few objects displayed at the *Kunstschau Wien 1908*, the preeminent exhibition of the Vienna Secession and a crowning achievement for the movement's and the country's leaders.

In 1897, when many progressive Viennese artists including Gustav Klimt, Koloman Moser, and Josef Hoffmann founded the Vienna Secession to counter

the rigid institutionalization of the fine arts, it signaled an entirely new era of modernism in the country. The Wiener Werkstätte was founded six years later in 1903, when Hoffmann and Moser sought to distinguish the design portion of the Secession and seek more control over all aspects of creation and production, establishing teams of talented craftsmen to execute their designs. As the Werkstätte expanded, their priority shifted towards creating entire interiors based on what German composer Richard Wagner termed the *Gestamtkunstwerk*, the total work of art, of which the present lot is an exceptional manifestation.

The Wittgenstein family was at the forefront of this new movement. Karl Wittgenstein, a steel tycoon and one of the wealthiest men in Europe, with a passion for architecture and the decorative arts, was the driving force behind a number of notable architectural landmarks such as the Hochreith Hunting Lodge, which included one of the three specially designed Games Tables. Karl Wittgenstein had close ties to New York and was a friend of Andrew Carnegie. His daughter Margaret Stonborough-Wittgenstein, married the American Jerome Stonborough, a physician with familial ties





to the Guggenheim family, whom she had met in Vienna. Margaret would become an important patron of the movement in her own right, posing for Gustav Klimt in 1905 and commissioning her brother, the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the architect Paul Engelman in 1926 to build the notable Haus Wittgenstein in Vienna. When Margaret and Jerome moved to Berlin, Karl Wittgenstein commissioned the interior of their apartment to be decorated by Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser.

Throughout their lives, the family maintained close ties with members of the Wiener Werkstätte, financially supporting the movement and assembling an important collection of art and precious objects. Margaret eventually inherited ownership of the present box, which she took with her to the United States where she emigrated in 1940. She sold the object herself at auction in 1949, just a few years before passing away in 1958.

Josef Hoffmann and Carl Otto Czeschka collaborated on many pieces throughout their time together at the Wiener Werkstätte. The present box, one of the most significant achievements of the duo's yearslong collaborative pursuits, captures the movement's insistence on creating a total work of art in all aspects of their craft. The four corners of the box, which mirror the gilt reliefs also designed by Czeschka to adorn the corners of the Games Table, feature ornately carved depictions of each of the four playing-card suits. Originally drawn on paper and then executed by the masterfully skilled craftsmen of the Wiener Werkstätte, Czeschka's hand-drawn studies for each of the four playing-card kings now reside in the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna. The designs came about at a time when Czeschka was increasingly interested in depicting medieval figures of chivalry, particularly as it related to Austro-Hungarian imperial might and the romantic

Notes:  
Carl Otto Czeschka  
Original sketches of  
the four card-kings,  
depicted on the  
Spielkartenkassette.  
Left to right:  
König-König;  
König-König;  
König-König; Pils-König  
© MAM, Vienna

ideal of the noble knight, a motif seen here on the corner suit panels of both the box and table. Each figure is exquisitely detailed and carved of gilt bronze, embellished with elements of ivory and mother of pearl to add to their elegant allure. The rest of the box is made up of a structure of macassar ebony adorned with shimmering plates of mother of pearl, tiled on all four sides and inset between delicately carved borders that separate the suits from all four sides. Crowning the box and holding what would have been a collection of playing cards is a subtly convex brass top, masterfully unifying the gilded corner suits and signifying the box's status as a real *Gestamtkunstwerk* in and of itself.

Further speaking to its importance within the oeuvre of Hoffmann, Czeschka, and the Wiener Werkstätte at large, the present work was one of the few pieces selected by the group's leaders to be exhibited in the *Kunstschau Wien 1908*, a major





Room 50 of the  
Rijksmuseum, 1908  
The Wittenberg Kiste  
and the present work





exhibition organized by Gustav Klimt to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of Emperor Francis Joseph I's reign in Austria. The exhibition was conceived of as the defining moment for the artistic achievements of the members of the Austrian art milieu since the establishment of the Secession eleven years prior, and featured some of the movement's most iconic

works, including the first public unveiling of Klimt's iconic 1907 painting *The Kiss*. In correspondence between Czeszka and Fritz Wärndorfer, a founder and financier of the Wiener Werkstätte, Wärndorfer details his first-hand accounts of the *Kunstschau* to the designer, remarking that "The exhibition is the most stimulating, the most astonishing

ABOVE:  
Gustav Klimt,  
*The Kiss* (1907).  
1907. Photo: Johannes  
Johann / Deutsches Museum

achievement that one can experience. Of course, there is no city in the world today that can put on an exhibition like this" (Translated from German in Heinz Spielmann, *Carl Otto Czeszka: Ein Wiener Künstler in Hamburg*, Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen, Germany, 2019, p. 98). Wärndorfer continues on to describe the contents of Room 50, the Wiener Werkstätte's dedicated exhibition hall, which was punctuated by what many refer to as the movement's pinnacle work – *The Wittgenstein Vitrine*. Also designed by Czeszka and purchased by Karl Wittgenstein from this very exhibition, the masterpiece now resides in the collection of the Dallas Museum of Art and features many distinguishable similarities to the present work. The Card Case was featured directly across the vitrine in a display cabinet that contained some of the movement's finest works, as elucidated by Wärndorfer:

"In the middle of the hall is the glass display case [the Wittgenstein Vitrine], which looks fabulous. Otherwise there is nothing in the room and only the five built-in cabinets containing the best things we have made. In the third compartment is the Wittgenstein Kartenkassette [the present Card Case] and the new one, behind it your fan, and right at the top the gilded attachments" (*ibid.*, pp. 98-99).

A genuinely one-of-a-kind marriage of craftsmanship, history, and provenance, the present work represents the rare opportunity to acquire an exceedingly important and unique masterwork of Wiener Werkstätte created by two of the century's earliest champions.



# 15 FERNAND LÉGER

1881 - 1955

## LES TROIS FIGURES

signed *F. LÉGER* and dated 21 (lower right);  
signed again, titled and inscribed *l'Etat*  
(on the reverse)

oil on canvas

25 1/4 by 21 1/4 in. 65.4 by 54 cm.

Executed in 1921.

\$ 3,000,000-5,000,000

### PROVENANCE

Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris  
Svensk Franska Konstgalleriet, Stockholm (on  
consignment from the above on 23 October 1948)  
Private Collection (acquired from the above in  
June 1951)  
Ragnar and Birgit Sandberg, Stockholm (acquired  
by 1954 and until at least 1964)  
Galerie Bonnier, Geneva (acquired by 1974)  
Galerie Beyeler, Basel (acquired from the above in  
September 1982)  
Private Collection, Paris (acquired from the above  
in October 1982)  
Hokin Gallery, Palm Beach  
Private Collection, New York  
Sotheby's, London, 24 June 1996, lot 54  
(consigned by the above)  
Private Collection, Germany (acquired at the  
above sale)  
Grisebach, Berlin, 24 November 2000, lot 68  
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago and Galerie Daniel  
Malingue, Paris (jointly acquired at the above sale)  
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago (acquired in full  
from the above)  
Acquired from the above in 2001 by the present  
owner

### EXHIBITED

Stockholm, Liljevalchs Konsthall, *Fran Cézanne til  
Picasso*, 1954, no. 70  
Copenhagen, Charlottenborg, *Efterårsudstillingen*,  
1959, no. 6  
Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Fernand Léger*, 1964,  
no. 17b  
Geneva, Galerie Bonnier, *Henri Laurens, pierres,  
bronzes et terres cuites de 1919 à 1944, Fernand  
Léger, peintures de 1920 à 1947*, 1974, no. 16  
New York, Richard Gray Gallery and Chicago,  
Richard Gray Gallery, *Richard Gray Gallery:  
40 Years*, 2003

### LITERATURE

Georges Bauquier, *Fernand Léger: Catalogue  
raisonné de l'oeuvre peint, 1920-1924*, vol. II, Paris,  
1992, no. 287, pp. 150-51, illustrated







ABOVE:  
Fig. 1 Nicolas Poussin,  
*Le Jugement de  
Salomon*, 1645,  
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

OPPOSITE:  
Fernand Léger in 1943.  
Photograph by  
Adrian Szegei



Among the myriad attempts to capture the new mechanical age at the turn of the century, by no other hand was the relationship between machine and man so deftly rendered than by that of Fernand Léger, and in no other work is that mastery more acutely visible than in his 1921 *Les Trois figures*. Executed in the waning years of his esteemed *Période mécanique* (1918–1923), which saw the pivotal formulation of his new approach to art with respect to the post-war industrial world, the present work ushers a triumphant return to figuration within Léger's oeuvre. In his distinctive visual vocabulary, the artist deftly weaves a lattice of metallic and figurative elements which convey the interconnectivity of the mechanical with quotidian life.

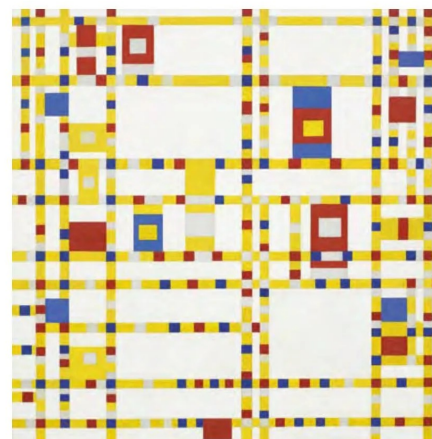
In dialogue with the broader move towards a neo-Classicism among his French avant-garde contemporaries, Léger here proposes a new idiom, strengthened by a strongly felt Classical order but adapted to its modern subject. One of two canvases depicting the present motif—the second version of which is held in the collection of the Kunstmuseum Solothurn—*Les Trois figures* stands as one of the most concise visual enumerations of Léger's belief in man's new place in an industrialized world.

*Les Trois figures* is a beautiful example of the unprecedented visual effect Léger was able to achieve as he repudiated the painterly brush-work of

his pre-war canvases for a method less sensuous and more adapted to the machine forms he so admired—a shift brought about by the transformative personal effect of World War I. While deployed to the front lines in the French region of Argonne, Léger produced numerous sketches of the world as it appeared around him—details of artillery parts, airplanes, and his fellow soldiers—that would seed the evolution of his artistic output upon his return from service. His daily contact with machines and the brilliance of a mechanized modern battle inspired an optimism in Léger that differed palpably from the nihilism it inspired in his artistic contemporaries.

"During those four war years I was abruptly thrust into a reality which was both blinding and new," Léger remembers. "I was dazzled by the breech of a .75 millimeter gun which was standing uncovered in the sunlight: the magic of light on white metal. This was enough to make me forget the abstract art of 1912–13. A complete revelation to me, both as a man and as a painter" (quoted in *Arts*, Paris, 1949). The war prompted Léger to reprioritize his artistic objective as such, so that this clarity of form would come to dictate the arrangement of his compositions, as it does in the present work.

This move towards a new objectivity within his own work was echoed by a larger shift in Paris at the time as part of what was termed *Le rappel à l'ordre*—



the return to order. The movement, prompted as a reaction against the tumult of war, renounced the projects of Dada, Surrealism and the experimental avant-garde in favor of academic, fine art traditions which offered reassurance in their stability and realism. Pablo Picasso engaged with the movement through his unique strain of neo-Classicism, borrowing from antiquity in both style and emotional symbolism, while at the same time engaging with age-old motifs like the harlequin (see fig. 5). Of Picasso's work from the period, it is in the final oil of this motif, likewise executed in 1921, which *Les Trois figures* finds its greatest kinship in terms of both composition and its geometrized approach to the classical idiom.

In his retrospective glance to the art of the past, Léger acknowledges the continuing vitality of Classical figurative styles but reconsiders them in the purest of pictorial terms. In looking at the work of Nicolas Poussin, for example, one can see how Léger's three figures offer a schematic reimagining of the three figures at the far right of *The Judgement of Solomon*

(see fig. 1). Poussin's strong architectural conviction and adherence to conventional perspective is here collapsed into one plane, with the glint of light reflecting off of the polished marble pillar simplified into the metallic sheen Léger communicates through the careful gradation of white on black. The present figures, reduced to their essential, are poised as stoic icons of the modern day, alleviated of the narrative and emotional responsibility they carry in the seventeenth century composition. This move towards objectivity was an essential outcome of Léger's sparing use of the Classical idiom.

As Christopher Green aptly articulates, "The frozen dignity of Léger's new machine-man image is given a Hieratic resonance, openly asserting his belief in the existence of constant pictorial principles to be found as much in the past as in the present" (Christopher Green, *Léger and the Avant-Garde*, New Haven and London, 1976, p. 201). At the same time that Léger was working on *Les Trois figures*, he was simultaneously working on *Le Grand Déjeuner*, a

ABOVE  
Fig. 2 Fernand Léger,  
*Contrastes des formes*,  
1913, The Museum of  
Modern Art, New York

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 3 Piet Mondrian,  
*Broadway Boogie  
Woogie*, 1943,  
The Museum of  
Modern Art, New York

canvas which, in its use of the motif of the reclining nudes, bears evidence of a much more pervasive Classicism (see fig. 4). In *Les Trois figures*, as in *Les Grand Déjeuner*, Léger appropriates the Classical ideals of balance and order to offer an image of modern harmony. It is precisely on account of this give and take between the two temporalities that Yves-Alain Bois contends: "[Léger's] determination to forge a link between the specifically modern and the great traditions of the past, without compromising either, is expressed more distinctly and more forcefully than it is by any other artist of the period" (Exh. Cat., Basel, Fondation Beyeler, *Fernand Léger: Paris—New York*, 2008, p. 136).

When Léger initiated his own "call to order" in 1920, it was not towards a sustained unification of style, but rather towards a simpler, coordinated presentation of stylistic contradictions, in which a unified architecture provided the setting for a more explicit articulation of the relationship between man and machine. As he understood it, doing away with

ambiguity worked in service of the same structural stability which the reformed avant-garde sought out in their Classical revival. But where these artists rejected the mechanical aesthetic of the modern age, Léger confronted it head first. *Les Trois figures* rings with the rhythmic metallic shrill of a world inconceivable to the ancient Greeks and Romans. It was precisely his consideration of a Classical ideal in the context of the machine, rather than in spite of it, that Léger's project was so distinct among that of his peers.

*Les Trois figures*, likewise, testifies to a pivotal moment in Léger's career in which he came to discover and hone the plastic qualities of color itself. Beginning with his revered *Contrastes de formes*, Léger endeavored to explore the potential held within the juxtaposition of pure color as a means of describing three dimensional space (see fig. 2). The present work denotes a maturity of this new plastic vocabulary, where pure tones are radically transformed into volumetric weights that come to occupy the same space as the mechanical elements



"FROM 1920 ON, [LÉGER'S] PAINTINGS, VIVID IN COLOR, HAVE GROWN MORE AND MORE INTO VALIANT ODES TO THE "MODERN OBJECT." MIGHTY HE CHANTS THE FORCES OF OUR TIME."

- AMÉDÉE OZENFANT, *FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN ART*, NEW YORK, 1952, P. 120

they describe. This masterful elision of color and form, beautifully applied to the figurative subject in *Les Trois figures*, heightens cohesion between the disparate components within the work. This sense of complete and utter integration echoes Léger's broader conception of the work of art as a perfectly synchronized machine. The indispensable role of the figures to the functionality of the overall pictorial arrangement marks a notable evolution from his contemporaneous series of *Éléments mécaniques*, in that man now takes the place of the namesake mechanical parts. These figures, so impersonally handled, so classically devoid of emotion, at first appear as a denial of the human body. And yet,

as they emerge from their entanglement with the mechanized world around them, Léger in turn communicates a confidence in man's place within this new landscape.

The ordered arrangement of the elements within *Les Trois figures* testifies to Léger's new formulation of space as necessitated by the advent of a new mechanical architecture. The striped floor, which recedes at a shallow angle from the bottom edge of the canvas, serves as the only suggestion of conventional perspective. The clearly-defined outlines which trace the outermost edges of the three figures likewise appear to overlap with the "background" so as to suggest two separate planes placed directly



OPPOSITE  
Fig. 4 Fernand Léger,  
*Trois hommes (Le Grand  
déjeuner)*, 1923-22.  
The Museum of  
Modern Art, New York

ABOVE  
Fig. 5 Pablo Picasso,  
*Trois musiciens (Les  
musiciens)*, 1921.  
The Museum of  
Modern Art, New York

on top of each other. This exaggerated flattening heightens the simultaneity of the composition, mimicking the synchronous energy and speed that defines life in the modern age. At the same time, however, when rendered in this extreme two-dimensional space, the compositional elements come to be dispersed across an axial grid. This strict geometry bears the influence of the principles of De Stijl, which Léger here utilizes to develop his compositional theories into a tighter discipline. De Stijl's forerunner, Piet Mondrian, would likewise develop the formal application of these theories from his work in the 1920s into a more figurative iteration in the 1940s, using the careful arrangement of primary colors along his iconic grid to echo the rhythmic movement of life in the modern city (see fig. 3). With these principles at hand, the present work therefore oscillates, between a figurative representation of a mechanical state of being and a formulaic exploration of the effect of color within space.

As Léger defiantly proclaimed of his work, "I think I was the first modern French painter to use the objects of our time as artists of other centuries used theirs" (quoted in Katherine Kuh, *Léger*, Illinois, 1953, p. 38). His was not a translative revival of the Classical tradition, but the declaration of a new Classicism, wherein myth was supplanted with the machine, and the figure of antiquity with modern man. *Les Trois figures*, rendered with all of its metallic splendor and formal efficiency, testifies to the new role of the artist put forth by Léger within that nexus as well. With the present work, Léger begins to renounce personal touch and to advocate that the hand of the artist be made as imperceptible as that of the craftsman. But what Léger points to is the evolution of the craftsman himself: from the mythic perfectionism of antiquity to the anonymity of the modern day industrial worker. Léger's hand, as it rendered *Les Trois figures*, falls somewhere between the two—directed only by his inclination and his aspiration towards a mechanical ideal.







16  
PABLO PICASSO

1881 - 1955

LA STATUAIRE

signed Picasso and dated 25 (lower right);  
dated XXV-II-XXV (on the stretcher)

oil on canvas

51 1/4 by 38 1/2 in. 131 by 97.8 cm.

Executed in 1925.

Estimate Upon Request

PROVENANCE

Galerie Paul Rosenberg, Paris (acquired directly  
from the artist by 1925)

Valentine Gallery, New York

Stephen Carlton Clark, New York (acquired from  
the above in 1930)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York (acquired  
as a gift from the above in 1941)

Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 11 May 1944, lot  
95 (consigned by the above)

Florence May and Samuel A. Marx, Chicago  
(acquired at the above sale through Pierre  
Matisse)

Mary L. and Leigh B. Block, Lake Forest, Illinois  
(acquired from the above on 19 October 1945)

Eleanor and Daniel Saidenberg, New York  
(acquired from the above in 1948)

Sotheby's, New York, 10 November 1999, lot 19  
(consigned by the estate of the above)

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

EXHIBITED

Paris, Galerie Paul Rosenberg, *Oeuvres récentes  
de Picasso*, 1926, no. 50

Amsterdam, Musée Municipal, *Cent ans de  
peinture française*, 1928

New York, Valentine Gallery, *Six Major Paintings  
by the Modern Masters of France: Braque, Derain,  
Matisse, Picasso and One Important Work by Henri  
Rousseau*, 1930, no. 5, n.p., illustrated

Paris, Galerie Georges Petit, *Exposition Picasso  
1901-1932*, 1932, no. 159, p. 54, illustrated

Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, *Pablo Picasso,  
1934*, no. 60

New York, Valentine Gallery, *Picasso: Twenty-One  
Paintings, 1908 to 1934*, 1938, no. 13

Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts, *The Human  
Image*, 1958, no. 67, n.p., illustrated

New York, Saidenberg Gallery, *Picasso: Faces and  
Figures, 1900 to 1959*, 1959, no. 2, n.p., illustrated

New York, Saidenberg Gallery, *Crosscurrents in  
Modern Art, Seven Decades, 1895-1905*, 1966, no.  
167, p. 95, illustrated (titled *Woman with Statue*)

Paris, Grand Palais, *Hommage à Pablo Picasso,  
1966-67*, no. 139, n.p., illustrated

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Picasso.  
Retrospective*, 1967, no. 65

New York, Marlborough Fine Art, *Hommage to  
Picasso for his 90th Birthday*, 1971, no. 38, p. 48,  
illustrated (titled *Statuary*)

New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *Pablo  
Picasso: A Retrospective*, 1980, p. 258, illustrated  
(titled *Woman with Sculpture*); p. 252





OPPOSITE  
 Mini-Roy, Picasso in His  
 Studio on the rue La  
 Boétie, Paris, 1922

#### LITERATURE

Maud Dale, *Picasso*, New York, 1930, no. 37, illustrated (titled *Femme sculpteur*)  
 Charles-Henri Peuch, "Picasso et la représentation," *Documents*, Paris, no. 3, 1930, p. 121, illustrated  
 Usaburo Ihara, *Picasso*, Tokyo, 1936, p. 27, illustrated  
 Jean Cassou, *Picasso*, Paris, 1940, pl. 33, illustrated  
 Alexandre Cirici Pellicer, *Picasso antes de Picasso*, Barcelona, 1946, p. 207, illustrated  
 Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso: Oeuvres de 1923 à 1925*, vol. V, Paris, 1952, no. 451, pl. 181, illustrated  
 Roland Penrose and John Golding, *Picasso in Retrospect*, New York, 1973, p. 249, illustrated  
 Frank Elgar, *Picasso*, Paris, 1974, pl. 53, illustrated  
 Pierre Descargues, Edward Quinn and John Russell, *Picasso*, Paris, 1974, p. 125, illustrated in color  
 Exh. Cat., Kunsthalle Bielefeld, *Picassos Klassizismus. Werke 1914-1934*, 1988, no. 14, p. 74, illustrated; p. 75  
 Giorgio Cortenova, *Picasso: The Works of Pablo Picasso*, New York, 1991, p. 197, illustrated in color (titled *Woman with Sculpture*)  
 Christian Geelhaar, *Picasso: Wegbereiter und Förderer seines Aufstiegs 1899-1939*, Zurich, 1993, pl. 154, p. 151, illustrated  
 Pierre Daix, *Picasso Life and Art*, New York, 1993, p. 190  
 Michael C. FitzGerald, *Making Modernism: Picasso and the Creation of the Market for Twentieth Century Art*, New York, 1995, p. 158, illustrated (in an installation of the 1926 Paul Rosenberg exhibition); p. 162, illustrated (titled *Woman with a Sculpture*); p. 216, illustrated (in an installation of the 1934 Wadsworth Atheneum exhibition)  
 Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art and Paris, Grand Palais, *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation, 1996-97*, p. 63, illustrated (titled *Woman with Sculpture*)  
 Josep Palau i Fabre, *Picasso: De los ballets al drama (1917-1926)*, vol. III, Barcelona, 1999, no. 1583, p. 445, illustrated (titled *The Sculptress*)

Brigitte Léal, Christine Piot and Marie-Laure Bernadac, *The Ultimate Picasso*, New York, 2000, no. 547, p. 231, illustrated in color; p. 230 (titled *The Sculptress and The Statue*)  
 Exh. Cat., Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum and The Cleveland Museum of Art, *Picasso: The Artist's Studio, 2001-02*, p. 33, illustrated in color; pp. 32, 34, 42 and 53  
 Rafael Jackson, *Picasso y las poéticas surrealistas. De la biología a lo sagrado*, Madrid, 2000, no. 85, p. 110; p. 109 (titled *La Escultura*)  
 Carsten-Peter Warneke and Ingo F. Walther, *Pablo Picasso: The Works 1890-1936*, vol. I, Cologne, 1994, p. 307, illustrated in color (titled *Woman with Sculpture (The Sculptress)*)  
 Exh. Cat., Williamstown, The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute and New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Clark Brothers Collect: Impressionist and Early Modern Paintings, 2006-07*, pp. 156, 180 and 340  
 Exh. Cat., New York, Whitney Museum of American Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, *Picasso and American Art, 2006-07*, pp. 151 and 155, illustrated  
 John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Triumphant Years, 1917-1932*, vol. III, New York, 2007, p. 302, illustrated (titled *The Sculptress*)  
 Exh. Cat., Zürich, Kunsthau, *Picasso By Picasso. His First Museum Exhibition 1932, 2010-11*, p. 101, illustrated (in an installation photograph of the 1932 Galerie Georges Petit exhibition)  
 Exh. Cat., London, Tate Modern and Paris, Musée Picasso, *Picasso 1932 Love Fame Tragedy, 2017-18*, p. 126, illustrated (in an installation photograph of the 1932 Galerie Georges Petit exhibition)  
 Enrique Mallén, *Pablo Picasso. The Interaction between Collectors and Exhibitions, 1899-1939*, Portland, 2018, pp. 97 and 277 (titled *La Statuaire (La Femme sculpteur)*)



In late September of 1925, Pablo Picasso, his wife Olga and their young son Paolo returned to Paris from their annual summer holiday in the South of France. The summers were beginning to blend together for Picasso, who was tiring of the swell set he and Olga socialized with. The home they returned to at 23 rue la Boétie was a changed one. After lengthy negotiations, Picasso had acquired an additional floor of the building to be used as his studio. He set about immediately modifying the space: removing doors from their hinges, bringing in his copious art supplies (and a limited amount of furniture) and stripping back most of the existing wallpaper. After years of jostling with his elegant and socially aspirational wife for space in their apartment on the floor below he relished a place to colonize as his own (see fig. 11)

Some years later the photographer Brassai related his impressions of the space: "I had expected an artist's studio, and this was an apartment converted into a kind of warehouse.... There were four or five rooms—each with a marble fireplace surmounted by a mirror—entirely emptied of customary furniture and littered with stacks of paintings, cartons, wrapped packages, pails of all sizes, many of them containing the molds for [Picasso's] statues, piles of books, reams of paper, odds and ends of everything, placed wherever there was an inch of space, along the walls and even spread across the floors.... The doors between all the rooms were open—they might have even been taken off—transforming the large apartment into a single studio cut up into a multiple series of corners for the multiple activities of its owner.... Picasso had stood his easel in the largest and

BELOW LEFT  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
*La Boétie*, 1925,  
Musée Picasso, Paris

BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Pablo Picasso,  
*La Boétie de nuit*,  
1925-26, Fondation  
Beyeler, Basel

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 4 Pablo Picasso,  
*Tête de femme*,  
profil gauche  
(Marie-Thérèse), 1932,  
Musée Picasso, Paris  
1933, Private Collection

best-lit room—what once had surely been the living room—and this was the only room that contained any furniture at all. The window faced south, and offered a beautiful view of the rooftops of Paris, bristling with a forest of red and black chimneys, with the slender, far off silhouette of the Eiffel Tower rising between them" (quoted in John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso. The Triumphant Years, 1917-1932*, New York, 2010, p. 298). It was in this room, with the doors opened onto the balcony, that Picasso painted *La Statuaire*.

As with all great works by Picasso nothing is as simple as it may at first appear. Moreover, the 1920s were a period of immense change, diversity and formal resolution in the artist's oeuvre. Picasso's paintings and drawings from this period exist in various modes, from wild explorations of Surrealist styles to monumental-themed Neo-Classical

imagery to a renewed Cubism that took color and flattened planes as its crux (see figs. 2-4). These associations—Surrealism with the avant-garde, Neo-Classicism with traditional art and Cubism with disruptions in art dating to before and during World War I—are disparate but, as always with Picasso, woven together to create new methods of expression, new ways of seeing. Writing about this work and other large-scale canvases from this period Michael Fitzgerald states "... these monumental paintings of figures and still lifes display a Cubism of such maturity and confidence that it subsumed apparently contradictory styles without diminishing its visual authority. For Picasso... these paintings demonstrated a masterful resolution of the issues that had roiled Picasso's art over the course of the previous ten year" (Michael C. Fitzgerald, *Making Modernism, Picasso*

## "FOR PICASSO, THE ARTIST'S STUDIO WAS THE CENTER OF THE WORLD."

- MICHAEL FITZGERALD IN EXH. CAT., HARTFORD, WADSWORTH ATHENEUM AND THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART, *PICASSO: THE ARTIST'S STUDIO*, 2001-02

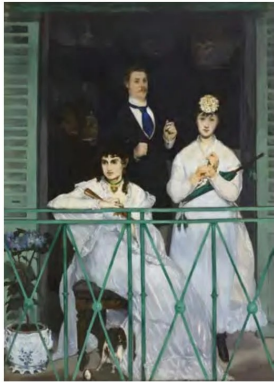




Fig. 5 This present work  
is related to  
Pablo Picasso  
A Retrospective at  
The Museum of  
Modern Art,  
New York, 1980

"LA STATUAIRE IS PICASSO'S MOST COMPLEX AND  
SEDUCTIVE EXPLORATION OF THE APPARENT  
CONTRADICTIONS AND POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS  
BETWEEN AVANT-GARDE AND HISTORICAL ART."

- MICHAEL FITZGERALD IN EXH. CAT., HARTFORD, WADSWORTH ATHENEUM  
AND THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART, *PICASSO: THE ARTIST'S STUDIO*, 2001-02



and the Creation of the Market for Twentieth Century Art, New York, 1995, p. 161).

In *La Statuaire* the artist depicts a seated female figure opposite a portrait bust, which is placed atop a pedestal. Seemingly parallel to each other, the pair is positioned in front of a set of open French doors, beyond which a balcony and an abstracted blue background convey, but do not confirm, the outdoors. The use of the balcony as a compositional device had been thoroughly explored in the previous century by the Impressionists. A visual symbol of Baron Hausmann's Paris, artists from Édouard Manet to Gustave Caillebotte arranged space and perspective, both to view the city (in the case of Caillebotte) and to view the viewers (in the case of Manet; see figs. 6 and 7). Picasso's balcony serves neither of these purposes. While it might abstractly imply the outdoors and the possibility of the female figure being seen by others, the primary act of looking here is between figure and sculpture or the artist—Picasso—regarding his own creation.

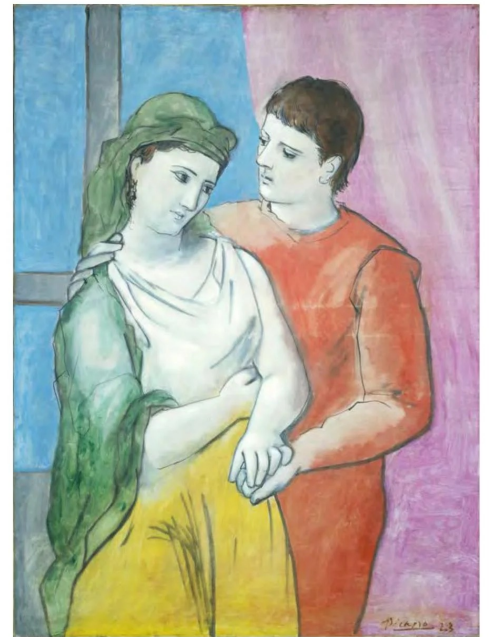
The present work's title *La Statuaire* refers to the Classical sculpture placed at left and is how the work is titled in the catalogue raisonné for Picasso authored by Christian Zervos. Other scholars, including John Richardson and Josep Palau i Fabre instead title this work *The Sculptress*. In the archives of Galerie Paul Rosenberg, who first exhibited this work in 1926, a year after it was created, the title for this painting is recorded as *La Femme sculpteur*. As these other titles allude to, the subject matter of this work is not limited to a sculpture that happens to have a woman seated next to it but rather the subject is an artist—a female sculptor—either working on an object of her own creation or examining a Classical sculpture for inspiration.

In 1924 Picasso began to create still life compositions featuring sculptures: "... several of these still-lives include painted versions of Roman portrait busts—the first substantial examples of classical art to appear in his work since the last years of the nineteenth century" (Exh. Cat., Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum and The Cleveland Museum of Art, Picasso:

TOP LEFT:  
Fig. 6 Édouard Manet,  
*La Balcon*, 1868-69,  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

BOTTOM LEFT:  
Fig. 7 Gustave  
Caillebotte, *L'Homme  
au balcon, Boulevard  
Haussmann*, 1880,  
Private Collection

OPPOSITE:  
Fig. 8 Pablo Picasso,  
*Les Amoureux*, 2023,  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C.



*The Artist's Studio*, 2001-02, p. 32). Picasso's painting technique, which employs incising in the bust and the figure, also reinforces the subject matter, echoing the physical actions that a sculptor uses when removing material to create three-dimensionality. By the early 1930s Picasso was using this type of direct carving method in his own sculpture while continuing to explore the subject of the sculptor regarding his or her own creations in his paintings, works on paper and print practice (see figs. 8 and 9).

What *La Statuaire* presents for the first time in

Picasso's oeuvre is a depiction of a female artist. In his analysis of the present work Michael Fitzgerald discusses this aspect as well as the inclusion of the classical bust and Picasso's nuanced painting techniques: "*La Statuaire* is Picasso's most complex and seductive exploration of the apparent contradictions and potential resolutions between avant-garde and historical art. Stemming from the Roman busts of contemporary still-lives, this painting offers a polyvalent set of readings. The woman might be one of the models common in his studio





Cat., Zurich, Kunsthhaus, *Picasso by Picasso. His First Museum Exhibition 1932*, 2010-11, p. 77). Two years later, the present work was prominently hung in the artist's first dedicated museum exhibition in the United States, at the Wadsworth Atheneum in 1934, where it was displayed opposite *La Rêve*, which today numbers among Picasso's most famous canvases. Within a decade of its creation *La Statueuse* featured in several of the most important Picasso exhibitions held globally; it would continue this course from the 1966-67 Grand Palais and Petit Palais exhibition in Paris to the Museum of Modern Art's groundbreaking *Picasso Retrospective* in 1980 where it balanced out the Surrealist exuberances of *Le Baiser* and *La Danse* (see fig. 5).

Since the year it was painted *La Statueuse* has been a part of not only the most important exhibitions of Picasso's painting but also belonged to some of the most important collectors of modern art. Initially acquired from Picasso by his dealer Paul Rosenberg, whose close alignment and support of the artist contributed to his global dominance at the pinnacle of twentieth-century art history, in 1932 the

present work had entered the collection of Stephen Carlton Clark. A wide-ranging collector, with special depth in European Impressionism, Modernism and American Art, Clark was an important steward of the arts, serving on the board of both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA). It was under his stewardship that the MoMA grew from a fledgling, relatively underfunded, young museum to the global establishment it is today. Alongside other works from his collection, Clark gifted the present work in 1941 to New York's bastion of modernism. The sale of *La Statueuse* by MoMA was directly involved in shoring up the museum's finances. In 1945, the present work entered the collection of Mary and Leigh B. Block, influential patrons of the Art Institute of Chicago. Within three years Leigh's sister Eleanore Saidenberg (née Block) acquired *La Statueuse* for her collection. It would remain with her until her death in the late 1990s. Featured on the cover of the sale of Saidenberg's Estate in 1999, *La Statueuse* entered the collection of Syde Miller, where it has remained until today.

pictures, except for the fact that she is clothed and her tan smock likely identifies her as a sculptor. This is Picasso's first depiction of a woman artist, a characterization that he would use regularly in the thirties and later. Despite an initial appearance of almost overly refined elegance, the painting is composed of extreme contrasts. The stark white and coarse features of the bust oppose the delicate flesh of the figure, and the soft tones of the picture—tan, aqua and gray—create a mellow effect in keeping with the sculptor's girlish appearance. Yet the execution is far from harmonious. Large, irregular planes of color are juxtaposed with forms that are rounded in perspective and realistically detailed; smoothly applied layers of paint are sliced through with the blunt end of a brush. Indeed, the woman's graceful features are partially drawn in this crude technique. The result is a subversion of the initial impression, as the painting's foundation in both ancient and avant-garde forms is revealed and sealed in a union that preserves differences as well as synthesizes a new

visual language" (Exh. Cat., Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum and The Cleveland Museum of Art, *Picasso: The Artist's Studio*, 2001-02, pp. 32-33).

Both Picasso and his dealer Paul Rosenberg understood the importance of *La Statueuse* and what it accomplished in exploring and unifying the multifaceted modes of Picasso's artistic expression. Less than a year after the present work was painted it hung in the most prominent position in Rosenberg's exhibition of Picasso's works, positioned immediately next to *Trois Musiciens aux masques*, now in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Six years later Picasso himself would select *La Statueuse* to hang in his seminal 1932 retrospective held at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris, where it shared a wall with *Femme nue, feuilles et buste* (see fig. 10). This exhibition "... was the first retrospective of a living artist to resemble a modern day blockbuster.... Its scope and aims were more akin to those of a museum undertaking, with Picasso himself acting as the chief curator" (Exh.

ABOVE  
Fig. 9 Pablo Picasso,  
*La Statueuse*, 1932.  
Musée Picasso, Paris.

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 10 The present  
work installed in  
Exposition Picasso  
1932 (1932) at  
Galerie Georges Petit,  
Paris, 1932.





Fig. 11 Pablo Picasso in his rue la Boétie studio, Paris, 1929. Photograph by Albert Heineke





## JOAN MIRÓ

1893 - 1983

### PERSONNAGE

inscribed *Miró* and numbered 4/4

bronze

height: 78 ¾ in. 200 cm.

Conceived in 1970 and cast in an edition of 4 numbered casts plus 1 artist's proof and 2 nominative casts; this example cast by Fonderia Artistica Bonvicini, Verona in 1971.

\$ 5,000,000-7,000,000

### PROVENANCE

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York  
Acquavella Galleries, New York (acquired from the above in 1990)  
Seibu Collection, Tokyo (acquired from the above in 1990)  
Private Collection, United States  
Galerie Vedovi, Brussels  
Acquired from the above in 1999 by the present owner

### EXHIBITED

Minneapolis, Walker Art Center; The Cleveland Museum of Art and Art Institute of Chicago, *Miró: Sculptures*, 1971-72, no. 90, n.p., illustrated

### LITERATURE

Exh. Cat., Paris, Galerie Maeght, *Miró: Sculptures*, 1970, no. 1, p. 20, illustration of another cast; p. 30  
Exh. Cat., London, Hayward Gallery, *Miró Bronzes*, 1972, no. 34, pp. 26-27, illustrations of another cast  
Exh. Cat., Kunsthau Zürich, *Joan Miró: Das plastische Werk*, 1972, no. 85, p. 53, p. 24, p. 107 illustration of another cast  
Exh. Cat., Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Sculptures de Miró. Céramiques de Miró et Liorens Artigas*, 1973, no. 111, p. 31, illustration of another cast  
Alain Joffroy and Joan Teixidor, *Miró Sculptures*, Paris, 1974, no. 150, pp. 68-69, illustrations of another cast  
Exh. Cat., Paris, Grand Palais, *Joan Miró*, 1974, no. 257, p. 157, illustration of another cast  
Exh. Cat., Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, *Miró: Cent Sculptures, 1962-1978*, 1978, no. 55, p. 47, illustration of another cast; p. 96  
Exh. Cat., Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Joan Miró: Peintures, sculptures, dessins, céramiques*, 1956-1979, 1979, no. 231, p. 100, illustration of another cast; p. 186  
Exh. Cat., Liège, Musée Saint-Georges, *Miró: Sculptures dans un jardin*, 1979, no. 11

Exh. Cat., Milan, Palazzo Dugnani, Palazzo del Sonato, *Miró Milano: Pittura, Scultura, Ceramica, Disegni, Sobreteixims, Grafica*, 1981, no. 248; p. 98, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Hommage à Joan Miró*, 1984, no. 167, p. 36

Guy Weelen, *Miró*, New York, 1984, no. 261, p. 180, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *Miró in Montreal*, 1986, no. 59, pp. 122 and 250, illustrations of another cast (titled *Figure*)

Exh. Cat., Barcelona, Fundació Joan Miró and Cologne, Museum Ludwig, *Miró escultor*, 1987, no. 63, p. 138, illustration of another cast (Barcelona); p. 152, illustration of another cast (Cologne)

Exh. Cat., Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, *Joan Miró: Sculpturen*, 1990, no. 58, illustration of another cast; p. 351

Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, ed., *Guide*, Palma, 1992, p. 77, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Humlebaek, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, *Samling og bygninger. The Collection and Buildings*, 1992, no. 299, p. 153, illustration in color of another cast

Pere Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 1205, p. 403, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art and Malmo Konsthall, *Joan Miró*, 1993-94, no. 25, p. 307, illustration in color of another cast; p. 436

Hubertus Gassner, *Joan Miró, der magische Gärtner*, Cologne, 1994, no. 69, p. 333

Exh. Cat., Palma, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca, *Poesia a l'espai: Miró i l'escultura*, 1996, no. 50, p. 154, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Martigny, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, *Miró*, 1997, no. 100, p. 187, illustration in color of another cast; p. 215

Exh. Cat., Museum Eki Kyoto: Hyogo Prefectural Maruyamagawa Park Museum; Iwate, Morioka Foundation for Cultural Activity and Aichi, Toyohashi City Museum of Art, *Joan Miró*, 1997-98, no. 84, p. 74, illustration in color of another cast; p. 87

Exh. Cat., Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Joan Miró: Creator of New Worlds. Skapare av nya världar*, 1998, no. 127, p. 183, illustration in color of another cast; p. 250

Exh. Cat., Ludwigshafen, Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, *Miró: Mein Atelier ist mein Garten*, 2000-01, no. 68, p. 115, illustration in color of another cast; p. 219

Janis Mink, *Joan Miró 1893-1983*, Cologne, 2001, p. 84, illustration of another cast (titled *Figure*)

Emilio Fernández Miró and Pilar Ortega Chapel, *Joan Miró: Sculptures, Catalogue Raisonné 1929-1982*, Paris, 2006, no. 213, pp. 212-13, illustration in color of another cast





OPPOSITE  
Fig. 1 Joan Miró in his  
studio, Son Boter,  
Palma de Mallorca,  
1968-69. Photograph  
by Plamas Montanya

ABOVE  
Fig. 2 Salvador Dalí,  
*Les Plaines d'Annunziata*,  
1929. The Museum  
of Modern Art,  
New York

Joan Miró's *Personnage* of 1970 arises from the late creative wellspring largely inspired by the artist's time in Mallorca. Soaring to more than six feet high, *Personnage* is one of the most accomplished and fanciful sculptures of the artist's oeuvre.

In 1958, Miró earned the Guggenheim International Award for the *Mur du soleil* and *Mur de la lune*, the monumental murals created for the UNESCO building in Paris. The prize money afforded the artist a newfound freedom, allowing him to purchase an expansive property in Palma, Mallorca just a year later.

The artist's new home, Son Boter, offered ample creative space and a quiet rural setting in which to work. It was there, ensconced in the Balearic countryside that Miró's attention turned to sculpture. From the time his studio was completed in 1966 until his death nearly two decades later, Miró's primary artistic efforts revolved around his three-dimensional

creations, his floors and walls rife with traces of his working practice (see fig. 1).

As the artist's biographer Jacques Dupin writes: "The sculptures from the last two decades of Miró's productive life took on a broad place and force. For Miró, sculpture became an intrinsic adventure, an important means of expression that competed with the canvas and sheet of paper—the domains and artistic spaces proper to Miró—without ever simply being a mere derivative or deviation from painting. Miró's approach and conception of sculpture offered him an immediate contact with a reality that, in painting, was attainable through the screen of an elaborately constructed language" (Jacques Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 2004, pp. 361 and 367).

Within this new discipline, the mainstays of Miró's painting practice, like his birds, women and stars, were reimagined in increasingly dynamic ways, with the personages of his 1930s paintings (see



fig. 3) reappearing on a monumental scale and further informed by aleatory objects. Whereas his early assemblages from the 1930s stemmed from the Dada and Surrealist practice of collage (see figs. 2 and 5), Miró's mature sculpture was driven primarily by the elements of the natural world and his immediate environs.

As Miró stated in a 1971 interview, his work from this period arose from "a very direct contact with the earth, with the pebbles, with a tree. When I'm living in the country, I never think about paintings. It's sculpture that interests me. For example... A pebble might determine a form for me" (quoted in *Exh. Cat.*, Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, *Miró Sculptures*, 1992, p. 37).

The sculptural roots of the figure in *Personnage*, particularly its head, can be seen as early as 1949 in Miró's granite *Tête*, in which the artist incised his own facial features into an oblong block of granite (see fig. 1). The very same sculpture would remain in Miró's possession for decades, joining the collected objects in the artist's Mallorcan studio and lending inspiration for later bronze figures like *Personnage*.

Of his mature sculpture, Richard Calvocoressi writes: "Miró's bronzes fall into two distinct types: those that have been modelled in clay and others which have been assembled from scrap or found objects. The former tend to be smooth and rounded, moulded by the artist's hand, while the latter are more often hard and rough, with jagged edges and parts that stick out... although both procedures are sometimes combined in the same work" (*ibid.*, p. 6).

The present work exemplifies the poetic balance of found object and modeled form. In contrast to Miró's polychrome sculptures like his 1967 *Personnage* or monumental bronzes like the 1976 *Personnage gothique, oiseau éclair* of 1976, which directly transcribe found objects like saddles and pitchforks, the present work uses organic elements as a point of departure, transforming the everyday into the otherworldly.

Like many of his contemporaries, those artists whose work was defined in part or whole by the Surrealist movement, Miró found a wellspring of inspiration in the natural world. A spiritual kinship is found between the present work—based on the form



ABOVE  
Fig. 3 Joan Miró,  
*Groupe de figures*,  
1938, Barnes  
Foundation,  
Philadelphia

OPPOSITE TOP  
Fig. 4 Preparatory  
object for *Personnage*,  
circa 1970, Fundación  
Pilar i Joan Miró, Palma  
de Mallorca

OPPOSITE BOTTOM  
Fig. 5 Joan Miró,  
*La Pierre (objet)*, 1931,  
Private Collection,  
Sold: Sotheby's,  
New York, 4 November  
2005, lot 37 for  
\$13.4 million

of pebble and an almond—and the undulating, almost coral-like sculptures of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, or even the bone paintings of Pablo Picasso in the late 1920s.

In an interview in 1971, Miró described the source material and process behind the present form of *Personnage*, stating: "It has to do with the unlikely marriage of recognizable forms. In most of the sculptures, several objects are combined. For example, 'Figure' 1970 [*Personnage*] is based on an almond; I enlarged it fifteen times its size in plaster to an intermediate stage—at this critical stage, I reworked the plaster, then I added a head, which is based on a small stone" (quoted in *Exh. Cat.*, Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, *Miró Sculptures*, 1971, n.p.; see fig. 4).

The present bronze was cast in 1971 by the Bonvicini Foundry. Upon its completion, the work

was shipped immediately to the United States where it featured prominently in the 1971-72 exhibition dedicated to Miró's sculpture which was held at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, The Cleveland Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago. This exhibition was organized in partnership with Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York and Galerie Maeght, Paris—who represented the artist on their respective sides of the Atlantic.

Of the seven total bronzes—four numbered, one artist's proof and two nominative casts—only two other examples remain in private hands. The other casts belong to institutional collections including the Louisiana Museum of Art in Humlebæk, Denmark, the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul de Vence, the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona and the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens in Purchase, New York.



# 18 FERNAND LÉGER

1893 - 1983

## COMPOSITION AVEC FIGURE

signed F. LÉGER, and dated 30 (lower right);  
signed again, titled and dated 30 (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

36 1/8 by 29 in. 92.3 by 73.5 cm.

Executed in 1930.

\$ 2,000,000-3,000,000

### PROVENANCE

Paul Rosenberg, Paris and New York (acquired  
circa 1930)

Walter Bareiss, Munich and New York (acquired  
from the above on 9 January 1953)

Walter Goetz, Paris and London

Alfred Richet, Paris (acquired from the above)

Sotheby's, London, 29 November 1994, lot 14  
(consigned by the estate of the above)

Hervé Oudermatt, Paris

Acquired from the above in 1998 by the  
present owner

### EXHIBITED

New York, Durand Ruel Galleries, *Fernand Léger*,  
1931, no. 10, illustrated

London, Rosenberg & Helfft, Ltd., *Exhibition of  
Works by Léger*, 1938, no. 18

(possibly) Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts,  
*Fernand Léger*, 1938, no. 45 (titled *Composition  
avec figures*)

Paris, Galerie Louise Leiris, *Fernand Léger 55  
œuvres, 1913-1953*, 1985, no. 19, p. 26, illustrated  
in color

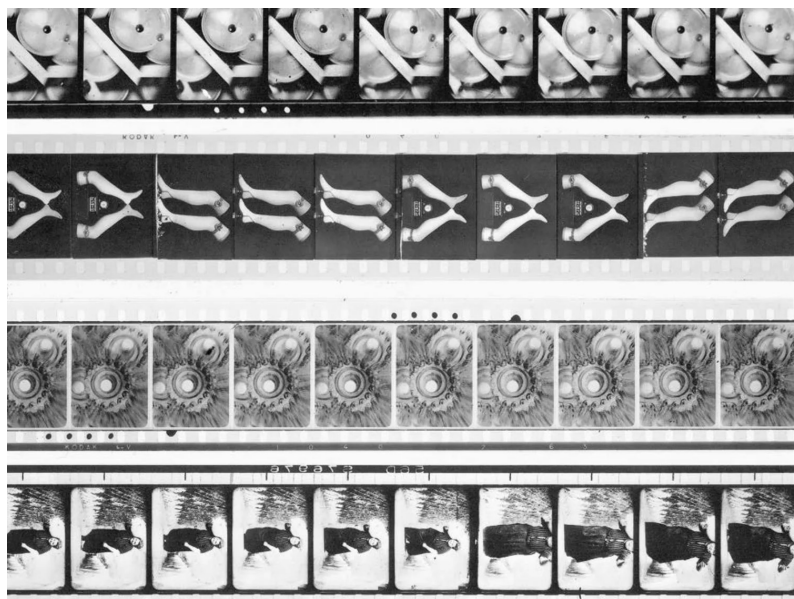
### LITERATURE

Elfratios Teriade, "Léger," in René Édouard-  
Joseph, ed., *Dictionnaire biographique des artistes  
contemporains 1910-1930*,

Paris, 1931, pp. 352-53, illustrated

Georges Bauquier, *Fernand Léger: Catalogue  
raisonné de l'œuvre peint, 1929-1931*, vol. IV, Paris,  
1995, no. 701, pp. 162-63, illustrated





OPPOSITE  
Fig. 1 Still from  
Fernand Léger's *Ballet  
Mécanique*, 1924.

THIS PAGE  
Fig. 2 Fernand Léger,  
*La Ville*, 1930.  
Philadelphia  
Museum of Art

matter upon composition, imposed by the Italian Renaissance. The effort towards freedom began with the Impressionists and has continued to express itself until our day... the feeling for the object is already in works of the high periods of Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman and Gothic art. The moderns are going to develop it, isolate it, and extract every possible result of it" (quoted in Edward Fry, ed., *Fernand Léger: Functions of Painting*, New York, 1973, p. 109).

*Composition avec figure* emphatically showcases the influence of Surrealism on the artist's aesthetic at the turn of the decade. From linear flourishes à la Joan Miró to biomorphic forms evocative of Jean Arp's sculptures, Léger wields the movement's iconography within his Purist aesthetic practices to masterful effect, endowing the composition with an air of flux and fluidity never before equaled in his oeuvre (see figs. 3 and 4). Deftly interweaving these organic shapes with sharply-angled elements suggestive of Léger's earlier industrial forms and superimposed text evocative of Cubist antecedents, the present composition achieves a refinement and balance invigorated by its dynamic formal contrasts (see fig. 2).

The novel conception of space present in *Composition avec figure* undoubtedly emerges from

the visual vocabulary of cinema—particularly the ideas of montage, close-up, and fragmentation—that deeply engrossed Léger by this period. The artist completed his first full-scale film *Ballet Mécanique*, in 1924, in which an amalgam of consumer objects, female faces and advertisements flash in a rhythmic sequence of isolated snippets akin to the idiosyncratic associations of disparate objects present in *Composition avec figure* (see fig. 1). Peter de Francia elaborated, "Parallel to his continuous work as a painter Léger was actively involved in the theatre and passionately interested in film... Léger was to make use of both the imagery and, more importantly, certain spatial effects directly derived from film... Heavy objects appear to float. Light ones plummet to earth. The static nature of the imagery is also given mobility through what is frequently an almost imperceptible giratory movement like that of slow motion film" (Exh. Cat., London, Edward Tootall Gallery, *F. Léger, Paintings, Gouaches, Drawings and Prints*, 1983, p. 5).

Corresponding with the embrace of human figuration and Classical referents among the artistic avant-garde as part of the *rappel à l'ordre*, or return to order, following the First World War, Léger adapted the female figure to his mechanized, geometric formal



As the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the subsequent onset of the Great Depression cast into question the supremacy of industry that defined the world order, so too did it prompt Fernand Léger and his contemporaries to reevaluate the foundations of their aesthetic project. "The crisis had forced them to confront fundamental and ongoing questions regarding the basic values of modern art—economic, social and aesthetic," wrote Matthew Afrom, "Léger concluded that artists, swept away by their enthusiasm for the machine, had failed to exert the precision, clarity, and equilibrium necessary to art. Too often, overwhelmed by the machine's novelty, they had fallen into an artistically sterile mechanolatry" (Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *Fernand Léger*, 1998, p. 131). Executed in 1930, *Composition avec figure* heralds the watershed moment in which

Léger renounced the strict mechanical vocabulary that had commanded his output of the preceding decade and embraced the vitality inherent to the natural world.

A superlative embodiment of Léger's ambition to diverge from his strictly geometrized compositions and instead show objects in a revitalized state, *Composition avec figure* presents forms radically liberated from spatial convention: a cosmos of discrete, quasi-abstract organic shapes and objects float atop an amorphous pane of golden yellow haloed by sumptuous black—an indeterminate space imbued with an air of enchantment. Unburdened from their typical settings, these elements resist interpretation or association, compelling the viewer to perceive each form solely as a plastic pictorial element. As the artist declared, "In painting, the strongest restraint has been that of subject

lexicon in the 1920s (see *Les Trois figures*). Over the course of the decade, the artist gradually softened and naturalized his human forms, reaching an apex in early 1930s paintings as typified by *Composition avec figure*. Arcing nearly the total height of the canvas, the titular figure of the present work asserts a statuesque monumentality, manifesting Léger's ambition to magnify the human presence within his output. Following the tradition of the Neoclassical masters, such as Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, Nicolas Poussin and Jacques-Louis David, Léger depicts his female figure as an elegant archetype, conferring upon her a universality and timelessness heightened by her enigmatic gaze and anonymizing features.

Idealized through the metallic gleam of *grisaille* and dramatic chiaroscuro, the female form of *Composition avec figure* assumes the role of the figure-object, a device integral to Léger's output of this period. Divorced from any contextualizing narrative, she serves as a pictorial element of equal import to the other objects in the composition. The artist wrote, "For me the human figure, the human body is no more important than keys or bicycles. That's true. For me they are objects valuable for their artistic potentiality and disposable according to my will...It was necessary for the modern artist to detach himself from this sentimental grip in order to see more clearly. We have overcome this obstacle: the

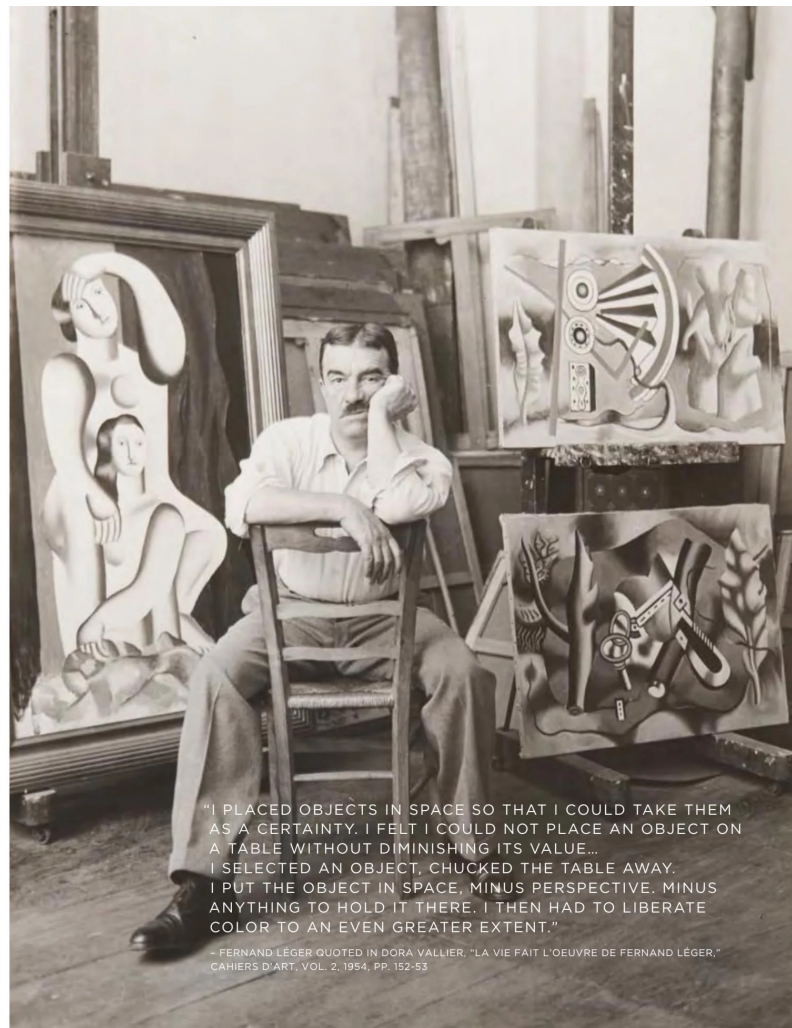
object has replaced the subject; abstract art came as a complete revelation, and then we were able to consider the human figure as a plastic value, not as a sentimental value" (Fernand Léger, *Comment je conçois la figure*, 1949, n.p.). Such emblemized renderings of the human form would persist in his subsequent work as a means of conveying a common humanity, from the uniform figures of his 1940s *Les Plongeurs* series to his populist tableaux of the 1950s.

Léger's masterful use of medium within *Composition avec figure* realizes his ambition to convey the pictorial essence of objects through a reduction to their ultimate elements of color and form, an aesthetic doctrine the artist summarized as, "painting first, then subject" (quoted in Carolyn Lanchner, Kristen Erickson, Matthew Affron, Jodi Hauptman and Beth Handler, *Fernand Léger*, New York, 1998, p. 225). Philippe Büttner expounds, "In Léger, assemblage-like composition generally goes hand in hand with a paint application that eschews painterly effects, letting the individual compositional elements remain clearly legible as separate parts. The overall result is Léger's famous 'cool' style" (Exh. Cat., Basel, Fondation Beyeler, *Fernand Léger: Paris—New York*, 2008, p. 14). Collapsing the visual dissonance between organic and mechanical forms, Léger forges a new harmony between man and machine.

BELOW LEFT  
Fig. 3 Jean Arp,  
Démolisseur, 1960.  
Private Collection.  
Sold: Sotheby's,  
London,  
19 June 2008, lot 36  
for \$965,352

BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 4 Joan Miró,  
Tête de poisson catalan,  
2004-25.  
Private Collection

OPPOSITE  
Fernand Léger in 1931.  
Photograph by  
Albert Gallatin



"I PLACED OBJECTS IN SPACE SO THAT I COULD TAKE THEM AS A CERTAINTY. I FELT I COULD NOT PLACE AN OBJECT ON A TABLE WITHOUT DIMINISHING ITS VALUE... I SELECTED AN OBJECT, CHUCKED THE TABLE AWAY. I PUT THE OBJECT IN SPACE, MINUS PERSPECTIVE. MINUS ANYTHING TO HOLD IT THERE. I THEN HAD TO LIBERATE COLOR TO AN EVEN GREATER EXTENT."

— FERNAND LÉGER QUOTED IN DORA VALLIER, "LA VIE FAIT L'OEUVRE DE FERNAND LÉGER," CAHIERS D'ART, VOL. 2, 1954, PP. 152-53





19  
HENRY MOORE  
1898 - 1986

RECLINING MOTHER  
AND CHILD

Inscribed Moore, numbered 3/7, and stamped with the foundry mark H. Noack Berlin (on the base)  
bronze

Height: 63 7/8 in., 213 cm.  
Conceived and cast in 1975-76 in an edition of 7 plus 1 artist's proof by Bildgießerei Hermann Noack, Berlin.

This work is recorded in the archives of the Henry Moore Foundation.  
\$ 8,000,000-12,000,000

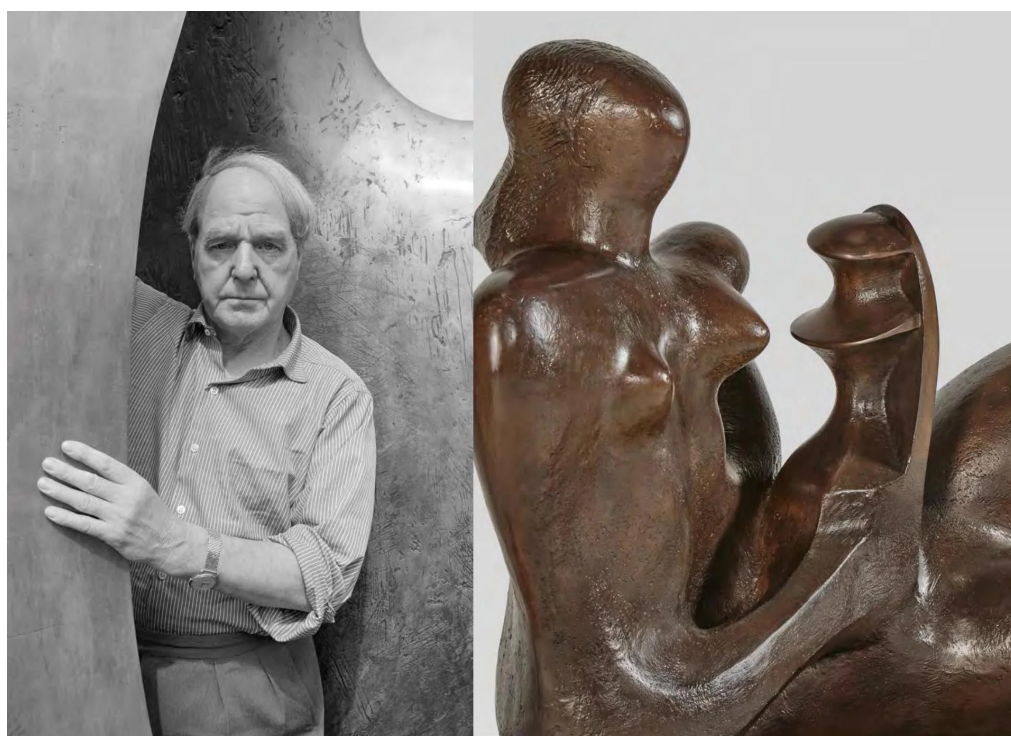
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Switzerland  
Peter Marino International, East Hampton  
Acquired from the above in 1999 by the present owner

LITERATURE  
Giulio Carlo Argan, *Henry Moore*, Milan, 1971, nos. 151-62, n.p., illustrations in color of another cast.  
Exh. Cat., Madrid: Palacio Velázquez and Palacio de Cristal, *Parque de El Retiro, Henry Moore Sculptures, Drawings, Graphics, 1902-1980*, 1981, no. 159, pp. 539-42, pp. 258-59, illustrations in color of another cast, p. XL.  
David Michelson, ed., *Henry Moore Sculpture, with comments by the artist*, Barcelona, 1981, pp. 539-42, p. 214 and pp. 258-59, illustrations in color of another cast.  
Alan Bowness, ed., *Henry Moore Sculpture and Drawings, Sculpture 1974-80*, vol. 5, London, 1983, no. 649, p. 19, illustration of another cast, pls. 14-13, illustrations of another cast.  
Exh. Cat., Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and Fukuoka Art Museum, *The Art of Henry Moore: Sculptures, drawings and graphics 1927 to 1984*, 1986, no. 34, pp. 62 and 210, illustrations of another cast.

Exh. Cat., New Delhi, National Gallery of Modern Art, *Henry Moore: Sculptures, drawings and graphics 1902 to 1984*, 1987, no. 137, n.p., illustrations in color of another cast.  
Exh. Cat., Hertschland, Hofstra Museum, Hofstra University, College Park, Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, Philadelphia, Arthur Ross Gallery, University of Pennsylvania (and travelling), *Mother and Child: The Art of Henry Moore, 1902-88*, no. 17, p. 126, p. 36, illustration of another cast (catalogued as LH 548 and dated 1974).  
Exh. Cat., Marigny, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, *Henry Moore*, 1989, pp. 252-53, illustrations of another cast.  
Exh. Cat., Milan, Castello Sforzesco, *Henry Moore al Castello Sforzesco*, 1989, p. 132, at. 79, illustration of another cast.  
David Michelson and Julian Chabran, *Henry Moore*, Barcelona, 1992, pls. 151-52, illustrations in color of another cast.  
David Cohen, *Moore in the Bagatelle Gardens*, Paris, Woodstock, 1994, no. 22, p. 144, pl. XXI, illustration in color of another cast.  
Ann Gammoll, ed., *Henry Moore: Complete Drawings 1900-1990*, Volume 1, London, 1996, p. 206 (dated 1974).  
David Michelson, ed., *Celebrating Moore: Works from the Henry Moore Foundation*, London, 1998, no. 236, pp. 40 and 59, p. 308, illustration in color of another cast.  
Exh. Cat., Dallas Museum of Art, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20th Century*, 2002-02, no. 96, p. 242, illustration in color of the plaster, p. 111.  
Miranda Lach, *The Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden at the New Orleans Museum of Art*, London, 2010, pp. 120-21, illustration in color of another cast.  
Werner Spies, *The Eye and the Word: Between Action Painting and Op Art*, vol. VIII, New York and Berlin, 2011, p. 149, illustration in color of the plaster.

ON-LAP  
Henry Moore n. 2001





"THERE ARE TWO PARTICULAR MOTIVES OR SUBJECTS WHICH I CONSTANTLY USED IN MY SCULPTURE IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS: THEY ARE THE RECLINING FIGURE IDEA AND THE MOTHER AND CHILD IDEA."

— HENRY MOORE QUOTED IN ALAN WILKINSON, ED., *HENRY MOORE: WRITINGS AND CONVERSATIONS*, BERKELEY, 2002, P. 267

Conceived in 1975-76, *Reclining Mother and Child* represents the pinnacle of Henry Moore's sustained engagement with his two most celebrated and prevalent motifs, the mother and child and the reclining figure, and typifies the expression of universal themes through radical interpretations of the human form that distinguishes him as one of the foremost sculptors of the twentieth century.

Moore engaged with the motifs of the mother and child and the reclining figure inexhaustibly throughout his storied career, from his earliest works of the 1920s. Rooted in his childhood experiences and further inspired by art historical precedents ranging from Renaissance iconography of the Madonna and Child to Pre-Columbian sculptures, the mother and child subject conveyed a fundamental humanity within the oeuvre of the artist and his peers (see fig. 5). Moore asserted, "From very early on I had an obsession with the mother and child theme. It has been a universal theme from the beginning of time and some of the earliest sculptures we've found from the Neolithic Age are of a mother and child. I discovered, when drawing,

I could turn every little scribble, blot or smudge into a Mother and Child. So that I was conditioned, as it were, to see it in everything" (quoted in John Hedgecock, *Henry Moore*, New York, 1968, p. 63). Scenes of Londoners clinging together for comfort as they sheltered underground from World War II bombing raids, which Moore depicted in hundreds of drawings as an Official War Artist, further crystallized the indestructibility of the bond between parent and child (see fig. 4). Strengthened by the birth of his own daughter, Mary, in 1946, this motif proliferated in the remainder of Moore's illustrious output as an emblem of hope and the permanent human bonds of support and compassion.

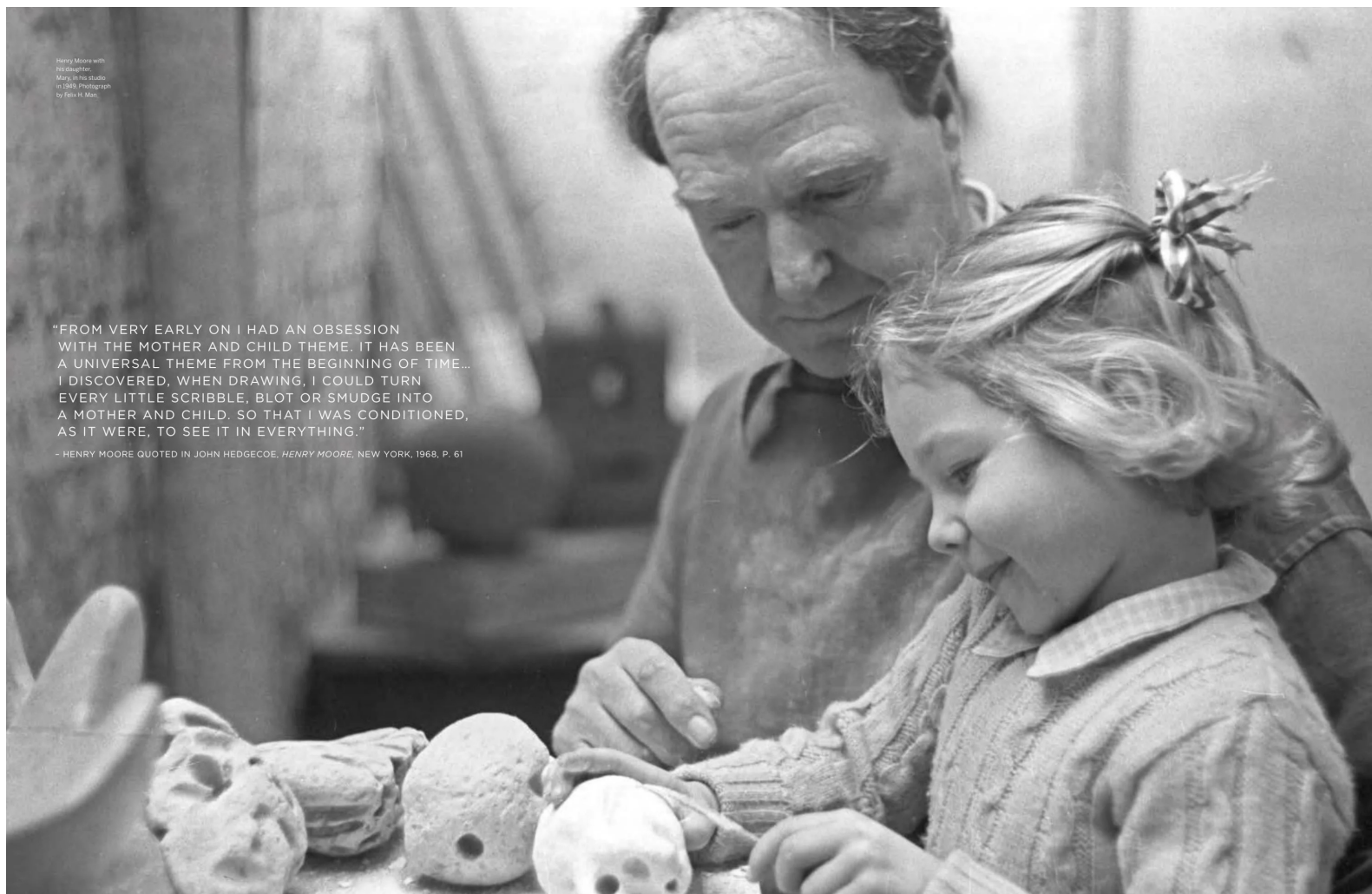
In tandem with the mother and child, the reclining figure formed the nexus of Moore's ceaseless examination of the elemental qualities of the human form, with the artist asserting that the recumbent form "gives the most freedom, compositionally and spatially... It fits with my belief that sculpture should be permanent, should last for eternity" (quoted in Philip James, *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, London, 1966, pp. 264-65). The distinctly modern invocation



Henry Moore with  
his daughter,  
Mary, in his studio  
in 1948. Photograph  
by Felix H. Mann

"FROM VERY EARLY ON I HAD AN OBSESSION  
WITH THE MOTHER AND CHILD THEME. IT HAS BEEN  
A UNIVERSAL THEME FROM THE BEGINNING OF TIME...  
I DISCOVERED, WHEN DRAWING, I COULD TURN  
EVERY LITTLE SCRIBBLE, BLOT OR SMUDGE INTO  
A MOTHER AND CHILD. SO THAT I WAS CONDITIONED,  
AS IT WERE, TO SEE IT IN EVERYTHING."

— HENRY MOORE QUOTED IN JOHN HEDGECOCK, *HENRY MOORE*, NEW YORK, 1968, P. 61



of the reclining nude likewise places the present sculpture firmly within a storied lineage of works on the theme throughout the modern canon, from Ingres' sensuous *Odalisks* to Matisse's languid, outstretched women (see figs 1-2). *Reclining Mother and Child* finds particular kinship in Matisse's 1953 *Grand nu allongé*, echoing the painting both in its monumental scale and the biomorphic quality of its sculptural rendering.

At once rapturously monumental and beguilingly tender, *Reclining Mother and Child* is an exceptionally rare synthesis of these two chief preoccupations of his career. The mother revels in her child, its size indicative of a small infant, holding it upright to behold its entirety in awe. Suggesting perhaps their first encounter, the present work expresses among the most profound, intimate experiences

between mother and child. Just as the reclining pose of the mother conveys the ease and serenity of this moment, the child's fusion with the mother's right arm physically attests to the strength of their bond. By reducing the pair to their most elemental forms, Moore underscores the fundamental humanity conveyed in the present work, its harmonious balance of volumetric forms further imbuing the work with a spirited vitality.

This suggestion of an essential humanity is furthered by the nuance of Moore's surface treatment and his dexterous ability to translate qualities of flesh into bronze. In the same way that the relative scale communicates the relationship between mother and child, so too does the difference in his handling of their skin. The stippled, at times almost porous description of the mother's torso stands in

BELOW  
Fig. 1 Jean Dominique Ingres, *La Grande odalisque*, 1826, Musée du Louvre, Paris

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 2 Henri Matisse, *Grand nu couché*, 1953, Baltimore Museum of Art



stark contrast to the smooth, polished finish of the child, a juxtaposition which poignantly conveys their difference in age. This subtle contrast in surface texture was carefully considered, gradually fading at the point of connection where the mother's arm merges with her child's side. The introduction of the concept of age into his rendering of the two figures confers a distinctly humanistic inflection on their otherwise anthropomorphic forms—a nexus between figuration and abstraction which aptly encapsulates Moore's larger sculptural ambitions. Just as these surface qualities are made inherent to the bronze, so too are they made inherent to the forms they

describe, imbuing the work with a sense of pathos which compliments that felt through their pose.

*Reclining Mother and Child* epitomizes the confluence of styles characteristic of Moore's late output, defined by Sir Alan Bowness as "certain sense of consolidation—the drawing together of the threads of a long and various career" (Alan Bowness, *Henry Moore, Sculpture and Drawings*, vol. 4, London, 1977, pp. 7 and 17). The sinuous, rhythmic curves of the mother, evocative of his naturalistic early works, counterpoise the infant, whose lyrical abstract angularity reflects his later oeuvre. Moore asserts the child's nascent uniqueness and individuality in



spite of the physical unity of the pair, Susan Compton underscores, "Moore's choice of symbol is vital to the work, for a child is not the image of its mother but her fruition, so he has insured that it does not resemble her but fulfills her: the unlikeness is integral to the meaning" (Exh. Cat., London, Royal Academy of Arts, Henry Moore, 1988, p. 267).

Unified by the rich patina, illuminated as if from within by its golden red undertones, the mother and child come to poetically illustrate the cyclical nature of life. Positioned face to face, there is a touching sense of reciprocity in their postured gaze, one in which each figure is poised as something of a mirror

to the other. The child is quite literally made an extension of its mother, and the mother an extension of her child, in such a way that makes explicit the symbolic character of their relationship. Moore's reduction of form to its organic essence heightens the innate and natural origin of that connection. Rendered on the present monumental scale, the mother and child are poised as one continuous entity, which in its natural abstraction comes to reinforce the universal quality of the motif.

By this period, Moore enjoyed a level of artistic freedom predicated on his international acclaim and a spacious work environment, empowering

ABOVE  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
Mère et enfant au bord  
de la mer, 1901, The Art  
Institute of Chicago

OPPOSITE LEFT  
Fig. 4 Henry Moore,  
Shelter Drawing:  
Seated Mother and  
Child, circa 1941,  
Private Collection. Sold:  
Sotheby's, London,  
June 2019,  
lot 4 for \$2.1 million

OPPOSITE RIGHT  
Fig. 5 Henry Moore,  
Mother and Child, 1932,  
Sainsbury Centre,  
Norwich

him to realize his artistic vision on a grander scale. The monumentality of *Reclining Mother and Child* enables the viewer to relish intimately in each carved expanse, thereby heightening the poignant emotions conveyed within the sculpture. Coupling connotations of the cycle of life with organic forms that echo the topography surrounding Moore during his late career, the present work invokes the symbiotic relationship between humanity, art and nature; its hewn surface further indicates the parallels between the process of birth and nurture and that of the act of sculptural creation itself. Gail Gelburd observes, "The reclining figure has always had references to the land for

Moore, but a reclining figure with a child is rare within his oeuvre...The figure retains a relationship to the land, but the addition of the child suggests that land has given birth to a new form. She is the stable form which gives life to children and to the earth. Her undulating forms melt into the land, conveying a sense of timelessness" (David Mitchinson, ed., *Celebrating Moore*, London, 1998, p. 343).

Other examples of *Reclining Mother and Child* belong to esteemed institutional collections including the New Orleans Museum of Art; The Henry Moore Foundation, Perry Green and the Ohara Museum of Art, Kurachiki.







A LEGACY  
OF BEAUTY  
THE COLLECTION OF  
STYDLE MILLER

20  
FRANZ KLINE

1910 - 1962

MASS. HARBOR

itled on the stretcher; signed FRANZ KLINE  
and dated 62 (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

67 1/4 by 92 1/4 in. 172 by 234 cm.

Executed in 1961.

\$ 6,000,000-8,000,000

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist

Private Collection, Germany (acquired from  
the above by 1981)

Private Collection

PaceWildenstein, New York

Acquired from the above in 2000 by the  
present owner

EXHIBITED

Cologne, Kabinchen Stadtmuseum, Werkkunst:  
Zeitgenössische Kunst seit 1939, 1981, no. 506,  
p. 202, illustrated in color; p. 426, illustrated

LITERATURE

Robert Mattison, ed., *Franz Kline Paintings,  
1950-1962*, Digital Catalogue Raisonné, 13  
December 2022, cat. no. 230, no. FKDSTHXL,  
illustrated in color (online)



20/16/61  
Franz Kline  
Paint, 1962



Painted in 1961, at the pinnacle of Franz Kline's career and the final year of his life, *Mass Harbor* depicts a striking silhouette of the urban landscape. The ethos of the city and its boundless energy was the beating heart of the artistic movements that shifted the canon of art history in the mid twentieth century. The atmosphere of the metropolis was ingrained into the very core of the Abstract Expressionist identity. The dramatic and energized characteristics of post-war life in New York in the 1950s burst forth from the brushes of Franz Kline and his contemporaries. An enduring draftsman, Kline keenly focused on the possibilities of structure and balance through positive and negative space, as he adeptly demonstrated in *Mass Harbor*. Kline's signature visual language, composed of the

minimal, contrasting elements of black and white and line and space, came to describe his legacy. *Mass Harbor* celebrates the inherent tension and power visible in the juxtaposition of these dichotomous forces present in the ever-changing urban landscape. Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Kline attended school in Philadelphia and then attended Boston University from 1931-32. Upon moving to New York in 1938, Kline quickly found himself among the emerging artists living and working in the downtown art scene, and often frequented the Cedar Bar with the likes of Willem de Kooning, Elaine de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Arshile Gorky. Through the 1940s, Kline slowly but unrelentingly whittled his early representational style into his own mode of abstraction. Kline's first solo exhibition with Charles Egan Gallery in 1950

marked a turning point for his career with the debut of his paintings in black and white and reflected the first glimpse of his mastery of abstraction. While the distinctive breakthrough in Kline's style came later than those of de Kooning and Pollock—who had shocked their peers and critics with daring stylistic shifts through the mid to late 40s—the hard-won realization of Kline's sophisticated style came with the recognition of his work that placed him among the masters of Abstract Expressionism in America (see figs. 1 and 2). Part of Kline's distinction from his contemporaries was his paintings' unique distillation of modern American life into pure gesture and form. Kline's ability to capture the visualization of a changing America was born directly from his trajectory that began in a declining coal mining town in Pennsylvania and culminated in a more than ten-year artistic struggle in New York City to find the style that would cement him as an icon of American abstraction. Simultaneously imposing and powerfully minimal, *Mass Harbor* invokes Kline's fascination with the revolutionary industrial and urban forms of his environment and most notably, of the modern age. *Mass Harbor* hums with a quiet energy that implies the monumentality of urban architecture and the fleeting buzz of cosmopolitan life in the early 60s. Kline's dramatic and decisive gestural composition, with rectilinear intersections and a resolute division of space, brings to mind the construction of the surging skyscrapers of Manhattan or, in reference to the title, the busy urban shoreline of Boston in what might be a reference to the city where he spent his formative years at university. Just as de Kooning's abstractions reflected the artist's visceral reaction to his metropolis domain, Kline indicated that his paintings were often informed by place, regardless of whether the work was immediately inspired by its titular reference.

Like the work of his similarly masterful contemporaries, de Kooning, Pollock and Mitchell, Kline's paintings possess an enduring power and dynamism traceable to their alignment with what critic Harold Rosenberg famously termed 'Action Painting' in 1952. In *Mass Harbor*, the raw force of Kline's gestures can be seen in his determined, directional strokes streaked against and within a contrasting plane of white. In contrast to the highly





complex gestural compositions of de Kooning and Pollock, many of Kline's greatest paintings are marked by an impressive and striking simplicity, as evidenced by the tectonic elegance of *Mass. Harbor*. Kline's compositions allow the misleading assumption that he simply painted heavy black strokes over white background without a great deal of modulation. In actuality, Kline's process alternated fastidiously between the two colors, often painted in layers with a six-inch brush, to achieve a unified composition in harmony with atmospheric grounds and improvised through his strong instinct for symmetry.

Kline's tendency towards draftsmanship was as vital to his practice as his gestural physicality. In a notable interview with art historian David Sylvester, Kline referred to his perpetual self-reference of the compositions of his earlier work. He confirmed: "A lot of the paintings have developed through painting out other paintings and then, in some way, I can use some reference maybe from part of another drawing, that maybe I had done three years ago, or something like that" (the artist in *ibid.*, p. 135). In *Mass. Harbor*, Kline references a recurring touchstone present in many compositions throughout the course

of his dynamic abstractions—the open square. The composition of *Mass. Harbor* is also remarkably similar in structural form and reduced gesture to *Composition*, a brush and ink work on paper he completed in 1955 which is now in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. The translation of the fluid, inky strokes and the relation of their varied weight, texture and intensity from *Composition* to *Mass. Harbor* evidences Kline's process of consistent self-revision as an aim to constantly re-evaluate and revise the possible arrangements of line and space.

Kline's absorption into the expanding American and international art scene precipitated rapidly through the 1950s. His work was included in the now notable Abstract Expressionist exhibitions *The New Decade* at The Whitney Museum of American Art in 1955, *Twelve Americans* at the Museum of Modern Art in 1956, and the highly lauded first female curator of the Art Institute of Chicago, Katharine Kuh, chose his work for the American pavilion exhibition *American Artists Paint the City* at the Venice Biennale in 1956. In 1961, the unwitting final year of his life and decade-long ascent to his peak artistic capabilities, Kline continued to push the boundaries of his own revolutionary

BELOW  
Fig. 2 Jackson Pollock,  
*Blue Poles*, 1952,  
National Gallery of  
Australia, Canberra

OPPOSITE  
The present work in  
Kline's 14th Street  
studio. Photograph by  
Virginia Dorch.



abstraction. It can be considered that the minimal approach to color, line and form that had distinguished him as a trailblazer of Abstract Expressionism began to influence the nascent aesthetics of Minimalism materializing in the 1960s. In a visit to Kline's final studio in 1961, when *Mass. Harbor* was completed, Katharine Kuh described the impression Kline's work left her with at the peak of his career:

"It was a heady spring morning when I arrived at Franz Kline's studio on West 14th Street. I believe the year was 1961. The place, buried in a sea of paintings, fairly exploded with raw power. But there was also a curious mystery about those canvases swathed in dark rivers of pigment that opened up only to close again. One moment the paintings seemed as clear and artless as translucent water; the next, they were obscure, hidden, unreachable" (Katharine Kuh, *My*

*love affair with modern art: behind the scenes with a legendary curator*, New York, 2006, p. 227).

This window into Kline's world reveals his perseverance and refutation of claims in the early 1960s that Abstract Expressionism was growing increasingly irrelevant. The output of the final year of Kline's career produced numerous examples that are now in the collections of esteemed museums, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. To his artistic peers and subsequent generations of artists, Franz Kline epitomized the Abstract Expressionist paradigm that questioned the formulaic boundaries of painting and was in the artistic vanguard at a critical juncture in American twentieth century art.

21  
JOAN MIRÓ

1893 - 1983

PROJET POUR UN MONUMENT

inscribed Miró and numbered 4/6

painted bronze

height: 20 1/4 in. 51.1 cm.

Conceived in 1979 and cast in a numbered edition  
of 6 plus 2 artist's proofs; this example cast  
by Fonderia Artistica Bonvicini, Verona in 1985.

\$ 600,000-800,000

PROVENANCE

Galerie Maeght-Lelong, Paris

Jeffrey Loria & Co., New York

Acquired from the above in 2001 by the  
present owner

LITERATURE

Exh. Cat., Galerie Maeght-Lelong, *Miró sculptures*,  
1985, no. 12, front and back covers, illustrations in  
color of another cast

Alain Jouffroy and Joan Teixidor, *Miró Sculptures*,  
Paris, 1973, no. 226, p. 158, illustration of the  
plaster; p. 206

Jacques Dupin, *Miró Firebird*, Paris, 1998, p. 115,  
illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Washington D.C., Corcoran Gallery  
of Art, *The Shape of Color: Joan Miró's Painted  
Sculpture, 2002*, no. 19c, p. 138, illustration in  
color of another cast

Emilio Fernández Miró and Pilar Ortega Chapel,  
*Joan Miró: Sculptures, Catalogue Raisonné 1928-  
1982*, Paris, 2006, no. 271, p. 260, illustration in  
color of another cast

Ech. Cat., Yorkshire Sculpture Park, *Miró: Sculptor*,  
2012-13, p. 102, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., London, Ordovas, *Chillida on Miró*, 2014,  
no. 44-45, n.p., and p.76, illustration in color of  
another cast





ABOVE:  
Fig. 2 Joan Miró, *Étude pour un monument*, 1939.  
Centre Pompidou, Paris

OPPOSITE:  
Fig. 1 Joan Miró, *Projet pour un monument*, 1972-75.  
Photomontage of the present work as a model for the proposed monumental sculpture at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, circa 1972-75



"SUCH READJUSTMENT AND DISTANCE, BY WHICH THE SCULPTED IMAGE INVITES COMPARISON WITH THE PAINTED IMAGE, TAUNTING IT AND CALLING ITS EXISTENCE INTO QUESTION, GIVES THE SCULPTURES IDENTITIES FOR ITS EXISTENCE, AN INTANGIBLE FIGURE BARELY SKETCHED, BUT FINISHED."

— JACQUES DUPIN IN EXH. CAT., MINNEAPOLIS, WALKER ART CENTER AND TRAVELING, *MIRÓ SCULPTURE*, 1971-72, N.P.

"It is in sculpture that I will create a truly phantasmagoric world of living monsters," Joan Miró prophetically declared in his notebooks of 1940-41 (Joan Miró and Margit Rowell, ed., *Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1986, p. 191). Executed over 30 years later in 1972, *Projet pour un monument* is a stunning materialization of that early dream. Though the artist had worked with sculpture on occasion throughout his career, it was not until the 1960s that he committed himself to the artform entirely. Yet even within the great body of late work he produced during the proliferative 1970s, the present sculpture, in its organic, biomorphic form, is unique among his uncanny assemblages of disparate found

objects. Sculpted from resin, overpainted with his distinctive palette of primary colors, *Projet pour un monument* testifies to the strength of Miró's distinctive sign language, and his inimitable ability to translate those signs into the three dimensional form.

As communicated by its title, the present work was conceived as part of a project for a public sculpture for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, a project which he envisioned using the present sculpture, enlarged to scale, as his model (see fig. 1). Although the monument was never completed, the form was later realized in large-scale bronze, one cast of which was placed in a public square in Milan, and another at the entrance of the Kimbell Art Museum





in Fort Worth, Texas. In 2003, several of these sculptures—all titled *Projet pour un monument*—were displayed in an exhibition *The Shape of Color: The Joan Miró Painted Sculpture*, held jointly at Washington, D.C.'s Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.

The genesis for *Projet pour un monument* stems back to the early 1940s, around the same time Miró created his celebrated *Constellations* (see fig. 2). When the German army invaded France in May 1940, Miró and his family sought refuge in his native Spain, settling on the island of Palma de Mallorca. It was there that Miró embarked on a series of twenty three, minutely worked gouaches. These *Constellations* evoke a cosmological world of his own invention, communicated through a command of color and a strength of pictographic clarity unprecedented within his body of work up until this point. As exemplified in the present work, the fantastic figures of women with wide hemmed skirts and lunettes of brilliant color that inhabit the series gradually evolved into fully formed sculptures.

*Projet pour un monument* makes pertinent reference to the sign language which reached its maturity in his earlier *Constellations*. On her chest, the present figure bears Miró's emblem of femininity, an ovoid or teardrop shape, here colored a vibrant

red, which is generally meant to symbolize the female sex. The symbol rests within a womb-like concavity that seems to hollow out her torso almost entirely, extending through to the domed protrusion of her back. There, situated between the figure's breasts, Miró carves a navel which, painted black, appears to extend endlessly into the center of the form. Through this alternation between physical intrusion and protrusion, Miró invokes a symbolic dialogue between interiority and exteriority, positioning the woman as the consummation of both.

This belief in material to communicate the mystery and magic of primordial life forces was shared in the project of his contemporary, Jean Arp (see fig. 3). When considered together, "Their art may be likened to images which come from the same exotic land—as if the artists were two explorers each of whom brought back from an extraterrestrial continent tidings which, while different, were yet of the same tenor" (Exh. Cat., Basel, Galerie Beyeler, Jean Arp / Joan Miró, 1979, n.p.). In their distinctly anthropomorphic nature, both *Projet pour un monument* and Arp's 1936 *Fruit méchant* are imbued with an essential mysticism which finds its origin in their organic character. More explicit in Miró's work, however, is a decisive invocation of the power held within the female figure. It is precisely the balance

between plastic and poetic symbolism captured within *Projet pour un monument* for which Miró's larger body of sculptural work was so celebrated. At his hand, the sculpted form is deftly transformed into a nuanced communicative idiom, one which both holds its own within and is strengthened by his broader Surrealist corpus.

As William Jeffett so eloquently articulates: "Unlike the other Surrealists, Miró situated the source of inspiration outside himself, in nature. The experience he expressed was that of receptive wakefulness, rather than of sleeping; the daydream rather than the nightmare" (Exh. Cat., Southampton City Art Gallery and traveling, *Joan Miró: Sculpture, 1989-90*, p. 9). *Projet pour un monument* stands as a striking invocation of this concept of day dream. When taken in the context of his mesmerizing *Constellations*, the present sculpture is poised to occupy a space between the lived and supernatural realms—an animation of the signs and figures which

occupy his painted Surrealist world. In her three dimensional form, the present figure stands as an uncanny interjection from that world onto our own. When conceived on its intended monumental scale, like the inspired works of his contemporary, Niki de Saint Phalle (see fig. 4), one can imagine how the arch created between the present figure's sloping legs would function as something of a gateway, giving passage to the oncoming viewer, while her towering scale, would demand reverence as they crossed beneath her. Unlike Miró's earlier sculpture, or that of his peers, the Surrealist quality of the present work stems not from the unlikely merging of its component parts, but from the physical transgression of his imagination into our lived reality. Conceived in 1979 and cast in a numbered edition of 6 plus 2 artist's proofs, the present cast was executed by Fonderia Artistica Bonvicini, Verona in 1985 and painted by Joan Gardy Artigas.

ABOVE  
Fig. 3 Jean Arp,  
*Fruit méchant*, 1936,  
Private Collection  
SOLD: Sotheby's,  
New York, 14 November  
2022, lot 1 for  
\$2.5 million

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 4 Niki de Saint  
Phalle, *Les Trois grâces*,  
1959, National Museum  
of Women in the Arts,  
Washington, D.C.



22

## HENRY MOORE

1898 - 1986

### MOTHER AND CHILD WITH APPLE

bronze

height: 29 1/4 in. 74.5 cm.

Conceived in 1956 and cast in an edition of 10 plus 1 artist's proof by the Art Bronze Foundry (Gaskin's), London circa 1956-57.

This work is recorded in the archives of the Henry Moore Foundation.

\$ 3,000,000-5,000,000

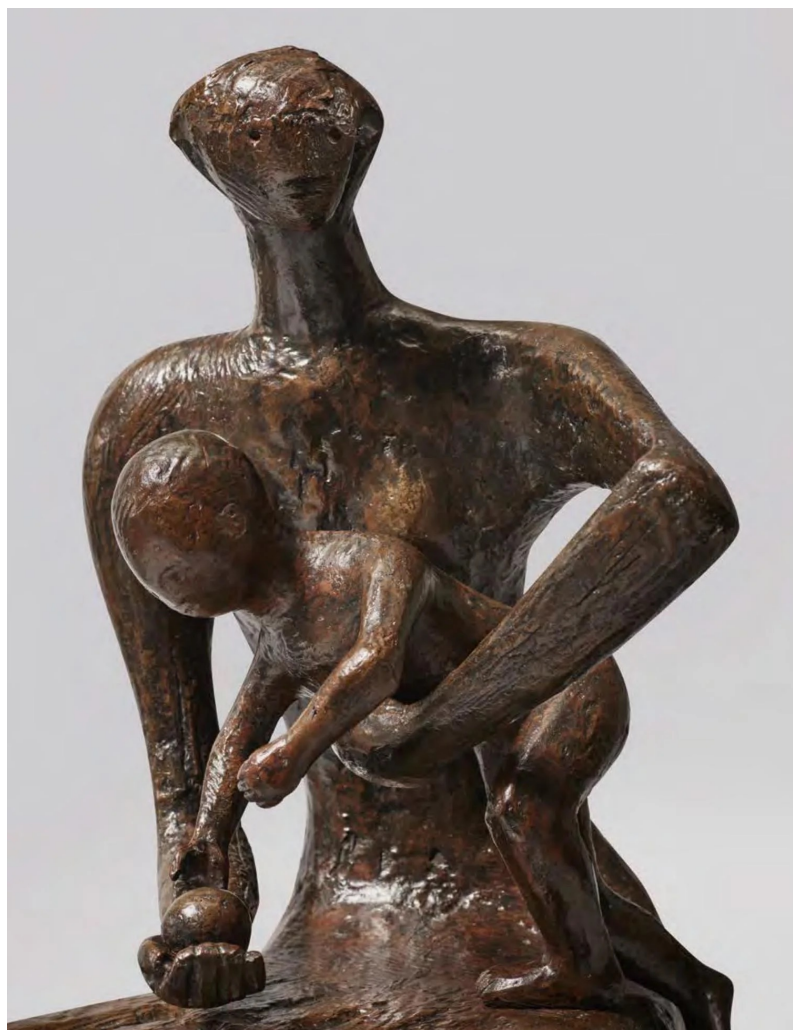
#### PROVENANCE

Private Collection  
Jory and Joseph Randall Shapiro, Oak Park  
(acquired by 1967)  
Sotheby's, New York, 9 May 1989, lot 49  
(consigned by the above)  
Private Collection, Miami (acquired at the above  
sale)  
Gasiunasen Gallery, Palm Beach  
Acquired from the above in 1999 by the present  
owner

#### EXHIBITED

Renaissance Society, University of Chicago,  
*Chicago's Homage to Henry Moore*, 1967, no.  
34 (titled *Seated Mother and Child (reaching for  
apple)*)  
Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, *Selections  
from the Joseph Randall Shapiro Collection, 1969-  
70*, no. 159, illustrated in color (titled *Mother and  
Child*)  
The Art Institute of Chicago, *The Mr. and Mrs.  
Joseph Randall Shapiro Collection*, 1985, no. 126,  
fig. 94, p. 93, illustrated in color; pp. 21 and 111  
(titled *Mother and Child No. I: Reaching for Apple*)





"THERE ARE TWO PARTICULAR MOTIVES OR SUBJECTS WHICH I CONSTANTLY USED IN MY SCULPTURE IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS; THEY ARE THE RECLINING FIGURE IDEA AND THE MOTHER AND CHILD IDEA... PERHAPS OF THE TWO THE MOTHER AND CHILD HAS BEEN THE MORE FUNDAMENTAL OBSESSION"

— HENRY MOORE QUOTED IN HERBERT READ, *HENRY MOORE: MOTHER AND CHILD*, NEW YORK, 1966, P. 29

#### LITERATURE

Caroline Burke, "A Call on Henry Moore," *The Diplomat*, October 1957, p. 26; p. 27, illustration of another cast and illustration of another cast (in a photograph of the artist's studio)

Exh. Cat., London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, *Henry Moore. Sculpture 1950-1960*, 1960, pl. 45, illustration of another cast (titled *Mother and Child Reaching for Apple*)

Will Grohmann, *The Art of Henry Moore*, New York, 1960, pp. 8 and 143; pls. 116-17, illustrations of another cast

"Sam Zacks," *Canadian Art*, vol. 17, January 1960, p. 256, illustration of another cast (with incorrect dimensions)

Anthony Gishford, ed., *Tribute to Benjamin Britten on his Fiftieth Birthday*, London, 1963, n.p., illustrations of another cast (titled *Mother and Child*)

John Hedgecoe, *Henry Spencer Moore*, New York, 1968, p. 266, illustration of another cast (in a photograph of the artist's studio)

Ionel Jianou, *Henry Moore*, Paris, 1968, no. 389, p. 81 (titled *Mother and Child No. 1*)

Reid Hastie and Christian Schmidt, *Encounter with Art*, New York, 1969, fig. 10-3, p. 321, illustration of another cast

Robert Melville, *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings 1921-1969*, New York, 1971, nos. 512-13, pp. 234-35, illustrations of another cast; p. 359 (titled *Mother and Child No. 1: Reaching for Apple*)

Giulio Carlo Argan, *Henry Moore*, New York, 1971, pl. 132, illustrations of another cast (detail); pl. 133, illustration in color of another cast (titled *Mother and Child*)

David Mitchinson, ed., *Henry Moore Sculpture, with Comments by the Artist*, New York, 1981, nos. 290-91, p. 141, illustrations of another cast; p. 312

William S. Lieberman, *Henry Moore: 60 Years of His Art*, New York, 1983, p. 124 (titled *Mother and Child with Apple*, no. 1)

Alan Bowness, ed., *Henry Moore: Sculpture 1955-64*, vol. 3, London, 1986, no. 406, pl. 6, illustration of another cast; p. 23 (titled *Mother and Child No. 1: Reaching for Apple*)

Angela Dyer, ed., *Henry Moore: Mother and Child Etchings*, Much Hadham, 1988, p. 16, illustration of another cast (detail)

Exh. Cat., Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Henry Moore: rétrospective*, 2002, no. 136, p. 167, illustration in color of another cast; p. 249

David Mitchinson, ed., *Hoglands: The Home of Henry and Irina Moore*, Aldershot, 2007, fig. 127, pp. 110-11, illustration in color of another cast (in a photograph of the artist's studio)

Christa Lichtenstein, *Henry Moore: Work. Theory. Impact*, London, 2008, illustration of another cast (on the cover; in a photograph of the artist's studio)





The motif of mother and child exists as one of the most fundamental themes in the whole of art history and lies at the heart of Henry Moore's pioneering oeuvre. Celebrated as one of the foremost sculptors of the twentieth century, Moore's greatest artistic contributions explore universal themes of humanity through the exploration and distillation of the human figure.

Conceived in 1956, *Mother and Child with Apple* presents a tender and uniquely modern interpretation of the subject. Each figure in the present work exudes a rich sense of emotion and dynamism, creating a vignette which is at once deeply personal and universally relatable.

In contrast to the artist's earlier, more staid depictions of the mother and child motif, like his *Madonna and Child* from 1943-44 (see fig. 2), the present work exudes a lightness of both essence and form. Executed more than a decade prior to the present work, Moore's first full-length depiction of the mother and child motif was realized in response to a commission for the Church of St. Matthew's in Northampton, England. The resultant *Madonna and Child* conveys an immutable, almost

monolithic presence which speaks not only to its ecclesiastical context, but also to the influence of Pre-Columbian sculpture on Moore's work at the time. By contrast, Moore's later *Mother and Child with Apple* addresses the same subject yet exhibits a decidedly more playful and interactive attitude, one informed by the artist's increased attention to the implications of space on form.

With *Mother and Child with Apple*, Moore achieves the keen poetic balance between presence and absence that would characterize his most successful mature work. Here, the artist juxtaposes the fullness of the mother's lap and chest against the slenderness of her arms. The resulting expanse created between her torso and arms draws the viewer's attention to a protective cove in which the delicate figure of the baby hovers. The calm and stability of the mother's posture is contrasted by the wriggling form for the child as it reaches for the apple, furthering the compositional balance as well as enhancing the dialogue between the two subjects. The inclusion of the apple as object of desire can also be seen as a nod to Judeo-Christian iconography and the reappropriation of such motifs throughout art history.

ABOVE LEFT  
Fig. 1 Henry Moore,  
*King and Queen*, 1952,  
Middlemore Open Air  
Sculpture Museum,  
Antwerp

ABOVE RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Henry Moore's  
*Madonna and Child*  
for St. Matthew's,  
Northampton,  
photographed in the  
artist's studio, 1943

OPPOSITE  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
*La femme à la  
poussette*, 1950,  
Hirshhorn Museum  
and Sculpture Garden,  
Washington, D.C.

Moore later wrote of the subject; "The 'Mother and Child' is one of my two or three obsessions, one of my inexhaustible subjects. This may have something to do with the fact that the 'Madonna and Child' was so important in the art of the past and that one loves the old masters and had learned so much from them. But the subject itself is eternal and unending, with so many sculptural possibilities in it—a small form in relation to a big form, the big form protecting the small one, and so on. It is such a rich subject, both humanly and compositionally, that I will always go on using it" (quoted in Alan Wilkinson, ed., *Henry Moore. Writings and Conversations*, Berkeley, 2002, p. 213).

With its subject matter and handling, Moore's *Mother and Child with Apple* provides an indisputable link with historical precedent and modern imperative (see fig. 3). Stemming from the work of the Renaissance masters the artist so admired, and recontextualized within an increasingly humanist and personal perspective, Moore's *Mother and Child with Apple* also holds an important place within the artist's acclaimed family groups of the 1950s. The present work can also be seen as a natural progression of such works like his *King and Queen* from 1952-53 (see fig. 1). In this monumental depiction of a couple, the female protagonist shares the same steadfast

demeanor and simplified attire as the mother in the present work, her feet connecting with the ground and providing a sense of security and completion in both sculptures.

A poignant and daringly modern work, *Mother and Child with Apple* stands as a notable achievement within Moore's renowned oeuvre. Other casts in the edition held in institutional collections including The Israel Museum, Jerusalem and The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The present example comes to auction for the first time.



II 23

## JOAN MIRÓ

1893 - 1983

### FEMME

Inscribed Miró, numbered 2/4 and inscribed  
with the foundry mark Fonderia Fratelli-Bonvicini  
VR-Italy

height: 122 in. 310 cm.

Conceived in 1970 and cast in a numbered edition  
of 4 plus 1 nominative cast; this example cast by  
Fonderia Artistica Bonvicini, Verona in 1971.

\$ 1,200,000-1,800,000

#### PROVENANCE

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York  
Acquavella Galleries, New York (acquired from  
the above in 1990)  
Private Collection (acquired from the above in  
1999)  
Peter Marino International, East Hampton  
Acquired from the above in 1999 by the  
present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Minneapolis, Walker Art Center; The Cleveland  
Museum of Art and Art Institute of Chicago, *Miró:  
Sculptures, 1971-72*, no. 89; no. 88, n.p., illustration  
of the plaster (titled Goddess)

#### LITERATURE

Exh. Cat., Paris, Galerie Maeght, *Miró  
sculptures*, 1970, no. 7, p. 28, illustration of another  
cast; p. 30  
Exh. Cat., Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght,  
*Sculpture de Miró, Ceramiques de Miro et Llorens  
Artigas*, 1973, no. 113, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Paris, Grand Palais, *Joan Miró*, 1974,  
no. 259, p. 157, illustration of another cast  
Alain Joffroy and Joan Teixidor, *Miró Sculptures*,  
Paris, 1980, no. 152, p. 76, illustration in color of  
another cast; p. 236

Exh. Cat., Milan, Ripartizione Cultura e Spettacolo,  
Palazzo Dugnani, *Miró Milano: Pittura, Scultura,  
Ceramica, Disegni, Sobreteixims, Grafica*, 1981,  
p. 97, illustration of another cast; p. 284

Exh. Cat., New York, The Pace Gallery, *Miró  
Sculpture*, 1984, n.p., illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., London, Waddington Galleries, *Joan  
Miró, Henri Laurens*, 1984, no. 11, p. 14, illustration  
of another cast

Exh. Cat., Madrid, Centro Reina Sofia; Barcelona,  
Fundació Joan Miró and Cologne, Museum Ludwig,  
*Miró, Escultor*, 1986-87, no. 97, p. 210, illustration  
of another cast

Franco Basile, *Joan Miró*, Bologna, 1997, p. 235,  
illustration in color of another cast

Emilio Fernández Miró and Pilar Ortega Chapel,  
*Joan Miró, Sculptures. Catalogue raisonné, 1928-  
1982*, Paris, 2006, no. 186, p. 187, illustration in  
color of another cast





"WHEN MIRÓ SCULPTED, EVERYTHING WAS EITHER ANACHRONIC OR UNEXPECTED. THERE WERE NO GROUND RULES...OR PERHAPS THERE NEVER WAS ANY BEGINNING OR END, ONLY THE PERPETUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE SCULPTOR'S IMAGINATION...AND THE OBJECTS WHICH ROSE BEFORE HIM, IMPOSING THEIR PRESENCE, THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN A VENTURESOME GAZE AND THE WORK'S RESPONSE TO IT."

- JACQUES DUPIN, *MIRÓ*, PARIS, 1993, P. 376

Joan Miró's studio,  
San Esteban,  
Mallorca





"THESE WORKS BEGAN WITH MIRÓ SLIPPING OUT OF HIS STUDIO, UNSEEN, ONLY TO RETURN WITH AN IMPROMPTU HARVEST OF OBJECTS, HIS BOUNTY...FOR MIRÓ, ALL PATHS WERE STREWN WITH SUCH MARVELOUS NOTHINGS, ALL OF LIFE'S REFUSE REMAINED ALIVE."

— JACQUES DUPIN, *MIRÓ*, PARIS, 1993, P. 374

Joan Miró's *Femme* arises from the artist's great body of late work which is defined by a keen interest in sculpture and monumental form.

After Miró relocated to Palma de Mallorca in 1956, his immediate surroundings and spacious property soon filled with all manner of found object, his floor and walls bearing the traces and process of creation.

The fruits of Miró's outings became the bases for countless inventive sculptures as the found and foraged objects were joined, rearranged and enlarged through multiple rounds of plaster casting. The women and birds which have always proliferated throughout the artist's oeuvre (see figs. 1 and 2) found new freedom on a grander scale, their voluminous forms conjuring Miró's earlier stylistic hallmarks yet surpassing the boundaries of linearity.

As Jacques Dupin states: "In painting, Miró produced his pictograms through the reduction and stylization of reality. Sculpture, on the contrary, allowed Miró to begin with concrete reality and collected objects, which were then internalized and

plunged into the fires of his imagination, thereby producing three-dimensional images" (Jacques Dupin, *Miró*, New York, 1993, p. 361).

Miró's assemblages, from his earliest Surrealist collages to the late sculptural oeuvre, are some of his most inventive works of art. Repurposing utilitarian objects like forks and pipes, with the occasional addition of objects from the natural world such as shells and rocks, the artist built his fanciful creations. According to Pilar Ortega Chapel, *Femme* was created using a shell and a tube of white glue that the artist assembled into a single form. From this model, he made a series of incrementally enlarged plasters before ultimately arriving at the large-scale model from which the final form was cast.

The reduction of form and color and dreamlike bodily contours—seen from Miró's earliest Surrealist oeuvre—serve as a throughline in the artist's career, carrying on into the impressive monumental figures like *Femme*. Rising more than three meters high, its stalwart yet elegant form conveys the essential

ABOVE LEFT:  
Fig. 1 Joan Miró,  
*Ombres et condensations  
amoureux d'une  
femme*, 1959  
Private Collection

ABOVE RIGHT:  
Fig. 2 Joan Miró,  
*La Femme au vase*,  
c. 1939, Piggy  
Guggenheim  
Collection, Venice

OPPOSITE:  
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso,  
*La Femme au vase*,  
1933, Piggy  
Guggenheim  
Collection, Venice

elements of the human figure through a combination of Miró's symbology and aleatory impulse. The upright arrangement of elements mimics the form of a standing figure, with the spiral seashell taking the place of the head. The two curved elements at the midpoint of the cylinder are easily read as breasts, while the vertical teardrop recession on the opposite side relates to a woman's sex, as so often depicted in the artist's paintings.

Like the Paleolithic stone carvings of goddesses of fertility, such as the famed *Venus of Willendorf* and the modern interpretations like Picasso's *Femme au vase* with their exaggerated sexual characteristics and absence of facial features (see fig. 3), Miró's *Femme* achieves a universal status as a representation of woman—the source of all creation.

Conceived in 1970 and cast in 1971, the present bronze is numbered 2/4 from an edition of 4, numbered casts, plus one nominative bronze made posthumously for the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona.



24

## MARK ROTHKO

1903 - 1970

### UNTITLED

signed MARK ROTHKO and dated illegibly (on a piece of canvas affixed to the reverse)

oil on paper, mounted on Masonite

39 1/4 by 26 1/4 in. 99.1 by 66.7 cm.

Executed circa 1953.

The following work is being considered for inclusion in the forthcoming Mark Rothko Online Resource and Catalogue Raisonné of works on paper, compiled by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

\$ 2,000,000-3,000,000

#### PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist

Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York (acquired from the above in 1970)

Hubert de Givenchy, Paris (acquired from the above circa 1971)

Galerie Beyeler, Basel (acquired from the above in December 1992)

C&M Arts, New York (acquired from the above in September 1993)

Private Collection (acquired from the above in 1993)

L&M Arts, New York

Private Collection (acquired from the above in May 1998)

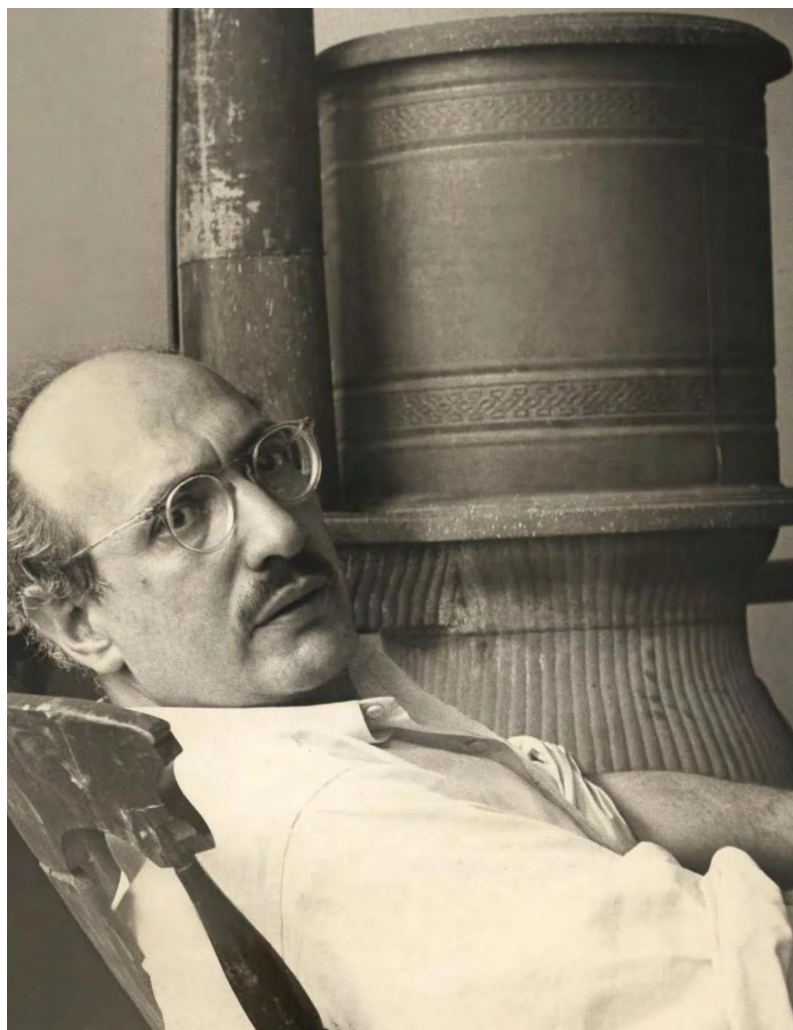
Gasiunasen Gallery, Palm Beach

Acquired from the above in 1998 by the present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Kunsthaus Zürich; Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz; Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf; Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen; London, Hayward Gallery and Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Mark Rothko, 1971-72, no. 25, pp. 42-43, illustrated in color (Zürich) (illustration inverted, catalogued as tempera on paper and titled *Red, Blue and Pink on Yellow*); no. 25, pp. 42-43, illustrated in color (Berlin) (catalogued as tempera on paper and titled *Rot, Blau und Rosa auf Gelb*); no. 25, n.p., illustrated in color (Rotterdam) (illustration inverted, catalogued as tempera on paper and titled *Rood, blauw en roze op geel*); no. 18, pp. 16-17, illustrated in color (Paris) (illustration inverted, catalogued as tempera on paper and titled *Rouge, bleu et rose sur jaune*)





BELOW LEFT  
Fig. 1 J.M.W. Turner,  
Sun Setting Over  
a Lake, circa 1840,  
Tate Gallery, London

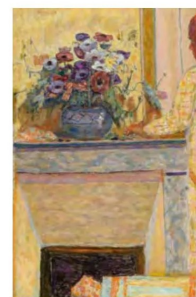
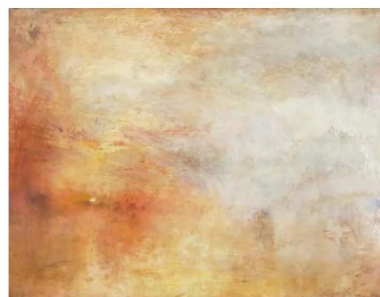
BELOW RIGHT  
Fig. 2 Pierre Bonnard,  
Fleurs sur une  
cheminée au Carriol,  
1927 Musée des  
Beaux-Arts de Lyon

OPPOSITE  
Mark Rothko in his 33rd  
Street studio, New York,  
1954. Photograph by  
Henry Ekan

A jewelike evocation of the sublime within pure abstraction, *Untitled* is an exemplar of the union of color and light achieved in the artist's revered corpus of works on paper. Executed circa 1953, at the height of what David Anfam, the late editor of the artist's catalogue raisonné, hailed as the artist's *anni mirabilis*, the present work heralds the watershed moment when Rothko resolved to express an essential, universal truth through an entirely unprecedented artistic idiom. By 1949, Rothko abandoned his multiform compositions—vivid patchworks of irregular, organic shapes inspired by his teacher, Arshile Gorky, and Surrealist predecessors' biomorphic forms—to contemplate what he termed "an unknown space" (see figs. 4 and 5). Assuming the mantle of his great Romanticist forebears such as J.M.W. Turner and Caspar David Friedrich (see fig. 1), the artist devoted himself to the pursuit of art as a portal to an enhanced realm of physical and spiritual experience. In a calculated purge of superfluous referent to symbols or nature, his multiforms' multitudinous passages coalesced into totalities of light and hue. *Untitled* stands as an evocation of Rothko's famed treatise on abstraction for, according to the artist, "The progression of a painter's work, as it travels in time from point to point, will be toward clarity; toward the elimination of all obstacles between the painter and the idea,

and between the idea and the observer" (quoted in Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *15 Americans*, 1952, p. 18). David Anfam deems these pivotal years the onset of the artist's "classical period," spanning the remainder of Rothko's oeuvre and containing his most consequential output.

Each passage of *Untitled* is constructed through the meticulous aggregation of laminae of brushed pigment, carefully layered stroke by stroke—in some places wholly saturating the paper, in others skimming lightly across the surface—creating not only chromatic resonance but also an evocation of spatial depth. A concentrated zone of warm hue anchors the upper register of the composition, haloed by a diaphanous aureate field and counterpoised by veins of cooler tones below. Feathery washes of opalescent white elide with the surrounding ground in the lowest register, simultaneously dissolving and commingling gently towards the vaporous bounds of each form. The pictorial surface is energized under the powerful motion of Rothko's brush, with all elements engaging in a choreography that ceaselessly shifts between theatrical sweeps of pigment and staccato drips, opacity and luminescence, evincing his expressive command of color and imbuing the surface with a distinct temporality. Such mesmeric dynamism envelops the viewer's attention, its illumined







passages cumulatively forming an immersive aura. Bonnie Clearwater proclaims, "It is in such painterly equivocation that Rothko's power lies, for he lures his viewer into an expectation of what he himself always awaited: a moment of revelation. Equivocation—all those slipping planes, those quivering tympanums...—gave so much back that had been banished from painting: a chance for metaphor, a chance of indeterminate, floating feeling, a chance for mystery" (Bonnie Clearwater, *Mark Rothko: Works on Paper*, New York, 1984, p. 13). A sanctum of pure color and light, *Untitled* invites somatic absorption, contemplation and discovery.

Rothko's orchestrations of pigment were doubtlessly informed by his 1952 move to a new studio on 53rd Street, just steps from The Museum of Modern Art. Where he once absorbed the rich palettes and painterly effects of light exhibited in the shimmering canvases of Pierre Bonnard's 1948 retrospective, Rothko now had unfettered access to the opuses of Henri Matisse such as *L'Atelier Rouge*

and *Danse*, whose radical redefinition of relationships between form, space and hue informed his own understanding of the expressive possibilities of color (see figs. 2 and 3); Robert Goldwater expounded, "Rothko means that the enjoyment of color for its own sake, the heightened realization of its purely sensuous dimension, is not the purpose of his painting. If Matisse was one point of departure... Rothko has since moved far in an opposite direction. Yet over the years he has handled his color so that one must pay ever closer attention to it, examine the unexpectedly joined hues, the slight, and continually slighter, modulations within the large area of any single surface, and the softness and the sequence of the colored shapes. Thus these pictures compel careful scrutiny of their physical existence... all the while suggesting that these details are means, not ends." (Robert Goldwater, "Reflections of the Rothko Exhibition," *Arts*, March 1961, pp. 43-44).

Through Rothko's genius wielding of paper's singular capacity to both absorb and reflect light,

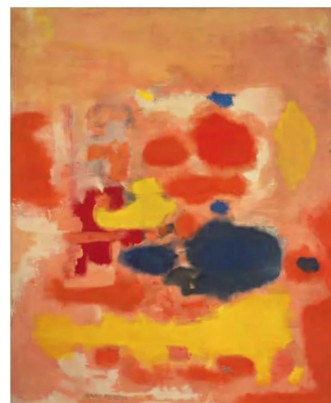
ABOVE  
Fig. 3 Henri Matisse,  
*L'Atelier rouge*, 1931,  
The Museum of Modern  
Art, New York

OPPOSITE TOP  
Fig. 4 Anish Kapoor,  
*Garden in Seattle*,  
circa 1940-41, Private  
Collection  
Sold Sotheby's,  
London, 25 March  
2023, lot 104 for  
\$11.2 million

OPPOSITE BOTTOM  
Fig. 5 Mark Rothko,  
*Untitled*, 1948, Private  
Collection

*Untitled* appears to emit an internal luminescence. Dana Crammer expounds, "In the 1950s... Rothko ignored the limits of physical coherence to achieve a translucency unique to his paintings. Light penetrated the attenuated paint film, striking the individual pigment particles and bouncing back to suffuse the surface and engulf the viewer in an aura of color" (Exh. Cat., London, Tate Gallery, *Mark Rothko, 1903-1970*, 1983, p. 192). Achieving the effect of transforming pigment into a vessel of light, *Untitled* conjures the sublimity of his most esteemed monumental canvases, all with a bewitching intimacy and delicacy of scale. "The engagement is more tightly calibrated, more purely optical, the intense colors and simply painted forms producing a compelling magnetic attraction," Adam Greenhalgh characterizes Rothko's works on paper, "The more human scale produces the effect of looking into a mirror... looking at one of Rothko's smaller-scale paintings on paper induces a sense of seeing oneself reflected in his luminous forms" (Exh. Cat., Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art (and traveling), *Mark Rothko: Paintings on Paper*, 2024, p. 34).

Last publicly exhibited as part of the artist's European posthumous retrospective organized by the Kunsthaus Zürich in 1971-72, the present work formerly belonged to Hubert de Givenchy. Founder of the eponymous couture house, Givenchy was not only a colossus of mid-twentieth century fashion, known for his dressing of the era's leading cultural luminaries, but also amassed a storied collection of modern and contemporary art spanning masterworks by Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró and Alberto Giacometti. Givenchy held a particular affinity for Rothko, recalling a visit to the artist's studio shortly after his death in February 1970 in which he acquired *Untitled (Red-Brown, Black, Green, Red)* of 1962, currently in the collection of the Fondation Beyeler, Basel: "...I thought he was a great painter... [Bunny Mellon and I] go to the studio one morning and there are 800 Rothkos. Mrs. Mellon buys 14, and I decided to reserve one for me... there were no other Rothkos in Paris" (quoted in Susan Moore, "Hubert de Givenchy," *Apollo*, 13 March 2018, n.p., online). Acquired by Givenchy in 1971 and owned by him for two decades, *Untitled* remained in the collection of Sydeell Miller for twenty-five years.



25

## WILLEM DE KOONING

1904 - 1997

### CROSS-LEGGED FIGURE

Inscribed de Kooning; numbered AP and stamped with the foundry mark Modern Art Foundry, New York N.Y.

bronze

height: 24 1/2 in. 62.2 cm.

Executed in 1972, this work is artist's proof 2 from an edition of 7 plus 3 artist's proofs.

\$ 1,000,000-1,500,000

#### PROVENANCE

Xavier Fourcade, New York  
Private Collection, Switzerland  
Gasiunasen Gallery, Palm Beach  
Acquired from the above in 1998 by the present owner

#### EXHIBITED

Zurich, Thomas Ammann Fine Art, *Willem de Kooning*, 1995, no. 8, n.p., illustrated in color  
New York, C&M Arts, *American Works: 1945-1975*, 1997, no. 9, n.p., illustrated in color

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Exh. Cat., New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *An Exhibition by de Kooning Introducing his Sculpture and New Paintings*, 1972, no. 47, n.p., illustration of another cast, illustration of another cast (with the artist's studio assistant at the Modern Art Foundry, Long Island City, August 1972); illustration of another cast (titled *Floating Figure*)

Robert Hughes, "Slap and Twist," *Time*, 23 October 1972, p. 71, illustration in color of another cast (titled *Floating Figure*)

Exh. Cat., Detroit, The Gertrude Kaseb Gallery, *Willem de Kooning: Paintings, Drawing, Sculpture*, 1973, no. 21, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Caracas, Museum of Fine Arts (and traveling), *Four Contemporary Masters*, 1973, n.p., illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Minneapolis, Walker Art Center (and traveling), *de Kooning: Drawings/Sculptures*, 1974, no. 142, fig. 65, illustration of another cast

Harold Rosenberg, *Willem de Kooning*, New York, 1974, pl. 204, n.p., illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Tokyo, Fuji Television Gallery (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning*, 1975, no. 38, n.p., illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., West Palm Beach, Norton Gallery of Art, *de Kooning: Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture, 1967-75*, 1975, no. 22, n.p., illustration of another cast

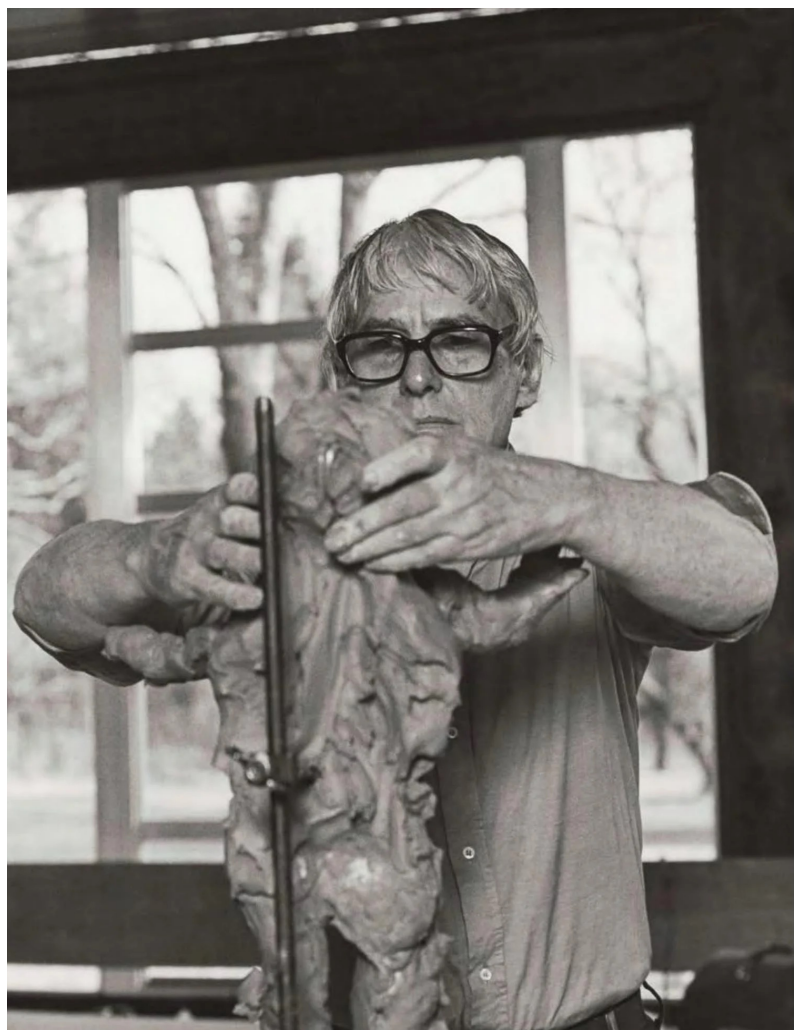
Exh. Cat., Geneva, Cabinet des estampes, Musée d'art et d'histoire (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning: Sculptures, Lithographies, Peintures*, 1977, no. Sc 16, p. 6, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Edinburgh, Fruit Market Gallery (and traveling), *The Sculptures of de Kooning with Related Paintings, Drawings and Lithographs*, 1977, no. 16, p. 53, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning: Beelden en Litho's*, 1976, no. B16, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Willem de Kooning in East Hampton*, 1978, no. 51, p. 122, illustration of another cast





OPPOSITE  
Willem de Kooning  
in 1972. Photograph  
by Hans Namuth

Exh. Cat., Cedar Falls, The Gallery of Art, University of Northern Iowa (and traveling), *De Kooning 1969-78*, 1978, no. 32, p. 43, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Pittsburgh, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, *Willem de Kooning: Pittsburgh International Series*, 1979, no. 119, p. 136, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., East Hampton, Guild Hall Museum, *Willem de Kooning: Works from 1951-1981*, 1981, no. 70, p. 30, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Cologne, Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, *Willem de Kooning: Skulpturen*, 1983, no. 15, p. 20; pp. 62-63, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning: Het Noordatlantisch licht / The North Atlantic Light, 1960-1983*, 1983, no. 65, p. 106, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., New York, Whitney Museum of American Art (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning Retrospective Exhibition*, 1983, p. 242; no. 271, p. 256, illustration of another cast

Harry Gaugh, *Willem de Kooning*, New York, 1983, fig. 89, p. 100, illustration of another cast

Joop M. Joosten, ed., *20 years of collecting: Acquisitions Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam 1963-1984*, Amsterdam, 1984, no. 440, p. 231, illustration of another cast

John Russell, "Art View: De Kooning's Freedom Came Step by Exuberant Step," *The New York Times*, 5 February 1984, section 2, p. 29, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, *Ten Years of Collecting at the MCA, Vol. I*, 1984, pp. 58-59, illustration of another cast

Philippe Sollers, *De Kooning: Vite II—Oeuvres*, Turin, 1988, no. 76, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art (and traveling), *Willem de Kooning: Paintings*, 1994, fig. 5, p. 178, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., London, Waddington Galleries, *Of The Human Form*, 1995, pl. 6, p. 14, illustration in color of another cast; p. 61

Exh. Cat., New York, Matthew Marks Gallery, *Willem de Kooning: Sculpture*, 1996, no. 15, p. 55, illustration of another cast

Sally Yard, *Willem de Kooning*, New York, 1997, no. 86, p. 101, illustration in color of another cast; p. 128

Exh. Cat., New York, Matthew Marks Gallery and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, *Willem de Kooning: Drawings and Sculpture*, 1998, p. 53, illustration of another cast

Exh. Cat., Bloomfield Hills, Cranbrook Art Museum, *Three Decades of Contemporary Art: The Dr. John and Rose M. Shuey Collection*, 2001, pp. 52-53, illustration in color of another cast (titled *Floating Figure*)

Mark Stevens and Annalyn Swan, *de Kooning: An American Master*, New York, 2004, p. 547

Barbara Hess, *Willem de Kooning (1904-1997): Content as a Glimpse*, Cologne, 2007, pp. 64-65, illustration in color of another cast; p. 67

Sally Yard, *Willem de Kooning: Works, writings and interviews*, Barcelona, 2007, p. 94

Exh. Cat., New York, The Pace Gallery, *Willem de Kooning: The Figure: Movement and Gesture*, 2011, no. 25, n.p., illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *de Kooning: A Retrospective*, 2011, pp. 397-98, illustration of another cast (in installation in New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *An Exhibition by de Kooning: Introducing his Sculpture and New Paintings*, 1972); fig. 9, p. 412, illustration in color of another cast; pl. 162, p. 414, illustration in color of another cast

Holland Cotter, "Art Review: Unfurling a Life of Creative Exuberance," *The New York Times*, 15 September 2011, illustration in color of another cast (installed in New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *de Kooning: A Retrospective*, 2011) (online)

Judith Zilczer, *A Way of Living: The Art of de Kooning*, London, 2014, no. 234, p. 197; p. 204, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., New York, Mnuchin Gallery, *De Kooning: Five Decades*, 2019, p. 90, illustration in color of another cast

Exh. Cat., Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, *Willem de Kooning and Italy*, 2024, p. 74; fig. 7, p. 85, illustration of another cast (with the artist's studio assistant at the Modern Art Foundry, Long Island City, August 1972); pl. 35, pp. 154-55, illustration in color of another cast; p. 243, illustration of another cast (in installation in New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *An Exhibition by de Kooning: Introducing his Sculpture and New Paintings*, 1972)

Jackie Wulfschläger, "Willem de Kooning and Italy. Accademia, Venice—review: a brilliant, bacchanalian show," *Financial Times*, 27 April 2024, illustration in color of another cast (online)





As if springing from one of Willem de Kooning's painted canvases, *Cross-Legged Figure* embodies the genesis of the artist's bold foray into sculpture from 1969-1974. Executed in 1972, the present work represents exceptional and captivating sculptural oeuvre. Alive with his signature fluidity, his Abstract Expressionist harmony of line and form and the tactile impressions of his artistic physicality, *Cross-Legged Figure* is emblematic of de Kooning's gestural ingenuity. As emphasized and recontextualized by the recent survey of the artist's work at Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice alongside the 2024 Venice Biennale, *Willem de Kooning and Italy*, de Kooning's sculptures were born from the artist's brief but fertile time in Italy; an experience that opened him to the vast possibilities of sculpture.

In 1969, de Kooning advanced his exploration of abstract figuration into the uncharted territory of sculpture. That summer, a chance meeting with his friend Herzl Emanuel, who ran a Roman bronze foundry, provided the decisive moment for de Kooning's creation of his first sculptures. Accompanying Emanuel to his foundry, de Kooning experimented with some discarded clay, creating a series of thirteen small sculptures. The artist would later refer back to this experience in the foundry and Rome's appeal to him as a lover of art and history claiming that the former looked "like the days of the Renaissance" (quoted in Exh. Cat., Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, *Willem de Kooning and Italy*, 2024, p. 82). After returning to New York, de Kooning had these sculptures cast in bronze and sent to his dealer, Xavier Fourcade. Despite Fourcade's initial lack of enthusiasm for the bronzes, when Henry Moore encountered the bronzes in Fourcade's gallery, he encouraged de Kooning to pursue the medium further. In 1971, de Kooning followed Moore's advice and produced a set of new, larger figures—loose, relatively minimal tangles of linear gesture—the sculpted figures of 1972-74 were mature manifestations of de Kooning's complex understanding of the figure and its formic capacity for abstraction at his hand, as evidenced by his vast mastery in painted iterations (see fig. 2).

In Italy, de Kooning's American lexicon of Abstract Expressionist gesture was cross-pollinated with the rich art historical setting of Rome. Just as



OPPOSITE TOP  
Fig. 1 Francis Bacon,  
*Henrietta Moraes*, 1956.  
Private Collection

OPPOSITE BOTTOM  
Fig. 2 Willem de  
Kooning, *Untitled*  
XXIX, 1977 Private  
Collection.

Sold: Sotheby's,  
New York, 15 November  
2022, lot 3 for  
\$24.4 million

ABOVE  
Fig. 3 Anonymous  
sculptor, *Lacoon and  
His Sons*, circa 40-30  
B.C., Vatican Museums,  
Vatican City

New York's buzzing skyscrapers and East Hampton's lush seascapes had informed his bursting canvases of the 50s and 60s, Rome served as a backdrop for the artist's inspired take on abstract figuration in the enduring medium of bronze. Although *Cross-Legged Figure* was completed in New York, de Kooning's inheritance of the mantle of sculptural history—from *Lacoon and His Sons* in the Vatican (see fig. 3) to *Apollo and Daphne* in Galleria Borghese—is evident in each considered form the textured contours along the hand-modeled surface. Suspended in motion, *Cross-Legged Figure* bears the alien vestiges of de Kooning's process—with a circular protrusion visible on the reverse of its head, an artifact of the cut-pipe armature on which it was formed, and the impressions of the artist's large, forceful fingers along the figure's back like a gestural spine. With a swirling, ambiguous anthropomorphism not unlike the contemporaneous

disfigurement of Francis Bacon (see fig. 1), the relics of process reminiscent of Pablo Picasso's sculpted collages of found-objects, and the quintessential de Kooning mastery of media—*Cross-Legged Figure* reveals the artist at the height of his figurative powers and full command over the sculpted form.

Despite his prominence in the field of abstraction, de Kooning never abandoned the human figure in his work. *Cross-Legged Figure* pays homage to the prolific influence of sculpture on the trajectory of art history, as experienced throughout the legacy of both the Renaissance Italian masters and modernism, combining an appreciation for the past with his individual influence on the present. One of the most dynamic sculptures from his three-dimensional body of work, *Cross-Legged Figure* represents the apex of an adventure that was as brilliant as it was brief, the perfect extension of the artist's painting into the solidity of a third dimension.



"THERE CAN HARDLY EVER HAVE BEEN SCULPTURES MADE IN WHICH THE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE MATERIAL IS MORE RAWLY EXPOSED... IN OTHER WORDS, THE GESTURES, THE ROLLING, PINCHING, GOUGING, FLINGING ACTIONS THAT ONE IS CONTINUALLY READING AS ONE MOVES AROUND EACH PIECE ARE NOT AGITATIONS OF THE SURFACE OF THE PIECE BUT RATHER THE CRESTS OF VIOLENT ACTIONS THAT GO TO ITS VERY CENTER."

— ANDREW FORGE, *WILLEM DE KOONING: SCULPTURE*, NEW YORK, 1996, P. 37



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OF BEAUTY

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A LEGACY  
OF BEAUTY  
THE COLLECTION OF  
SYDELL MILLER

## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### MAIN D'ALICE

numbered 3/8, monogrammed CL, impressed  
LALANNE and dated 2000  
patinated and gold patinated bronze  
4 1/4 by 7 1/2 by 3 1/4 in.  
12.2 by 19.1 by 9.4 cm.  
Executed in 2000, number 3 from an edition of 8.

\$ 60,000-80,000



## HENRI MATISSE

1869 - 1954

### BUSTE DE JEUNE FEMME TOURNÉE À DROITE

signed H. Matisse and dated 46 (lower left);  
numbered C1 (lower right)  
Conté crayon on paper  
20 1/4 by 16 in.  
52.7 by 40.6 cm.  
Executed in Venice in 1946.

\$ 80,000-120,000



HENRI MATISSE

1869 - 1954

ODALISQUE

signed and dedicated avec toute la gratitude de  
Henri Matisse (1937) (lower right)  
pencil on paper  
9 1/4 by 13 1/4 in.  
25 by 35.2 cm.  
Executed in Nice in 1919.

\$ 70,000-90,000



RAOUL DUFY

1878 - 1953

NU COUCHÉ DANS  
L'ATELIER DE LA RUE  
JEANNE-D'ARC

signed Raoul Dufy (lower center)  
oil on board  
19 1/4 by 25 1/2 in.  
48.3 by 63.5 cm.  
Executed in 1942.

\$ 150,000-250,000





## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A UNIQUE "OISEAUX" MIRROR

ornamented with four birds  
numbered 1/1 M, monogrammed CL, impressed LALANNE and  
dated 2001  
gold patinated bronze and mirrored glass  
55 1/2 by 36 1/4 in.  
141 by 93 cm.  
Executed in 2001, number 1M from an edition of 1.

\$ 1,000,000-1,500,000



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## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A UNIQUE "OISEAUX" MIRROR

ornamented with four birds  
numbered 1/1 M, monogrammed CL, impressed LALANNE and  
dated 2001  
gold patinated bronze and mirrored glass  
55 1/2 by 36 1/4 in.  
141 by 93 cm.  
Executed in 2001, number 1M from an edition of 1.

\$ 1.000.000-1.500.000

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CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

"OISEAUX ET PAPILLON"  
ÉTAGÈRE

ornamented with three birds and one butterfly  
numbered B 1/8, monogrammed CL, impressed LALANNE  
and dated 2003  
gold patinated bronze and galvanized copper  
48 by 12 1/4 by 12 1/4 in.  
121.9 by 31.1 by 31.1 cm.  
Executed in 2003, number 18 from an edition of 8 plus 4  
artist's proofs.

\$ 200,000-300,000

CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

"OISEAUX ET PAPILLONS"  
ÉTAGÈRE

ornamented with two birds and two butterflies  
numbered A 1/8, monogrammed CL, impressed LALANNE  
and dated 2003  
gold patinated bronze and galvanized copper  
48 by 12 1/4 by 12 1/4 in.  
121.9 by 31.1 by 31.1 cm.  
Executed in 2003, number 1A from an edition of 8 plus 4  
artist's proofs.

\$ 200,000-300,000









## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A UNIQUE "OISEAUX ET PAPILLON" CHANDELIER

ornamented with two birds and one butterfly  
impressed LALANNE, dated 2001,  
monogrammed CL and numbered A 1/1 M  
gold patinated bronze  
height: 25 in. 66 cm.  
diameter: 22 1/2 in. 57.3 cm.  
Executed in 2001, number 1A from an edition of 1.

\$ 300,000-500,000



## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A PAIR OF UNIQUE "OISEAUX" TWO-LIGHT SCONCES

each ornamented with one bird  
gold patinated bronze  
(i): numbered 1/1 M, impressed LALANNE, monogrammed CL  
and dated 2001.  
15 1/4 by 12 1/2 by 5 1/2 in.  
38.7 by 31.8 by 14 cm.  
(ii): dated 2001, numbered M 1/1 B, monogrammed CL and  
impressed LALANNE  
14 1/4 by 11 1/4 by 5 1/2 in.  
37.5 by 29.8 by 14 cm.  
Executed in 2001, numbers 1M and 1B from an edition of 1.

\$ 200,000-300,000

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## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A PAIR OF UNIQUE "OISEAUX" TWO-LIGHT SCONCES

each ornamented with one bird  
gold patinated bronze  
(l): numbered M 1/1 A, dated 2001, impressed LALANNE and  
monogrammed CL  
15 1/4 by 11 1/2 by 4 1/2 in.  
38.7 by 29.2 by 11.4 cm.  
(r): dated 2001, numbered 1/1 M, monogrammed CL and  
impressed LALANNE  
14 1/2 by 10 1/2 by 4 1/2 in.  
36.9 by 26.8 by 11.4 cm.  
Executed in 2001, numbers 1A and 1M from an edition of 1.  
\$ 200,000-300,000



## CLAUDE LALANNE

1925 - 2019

### A UNIQUE "OISEAUX ET PAPILLON" CHANDELIER

ornamented with three birds and one butterfly  
numbered B 1/1 M, monogrammed CL,  
impressed LALANNE and dated 2001  
gold patinated bronze  
height: 26 in. 66 cm.  
diameter: 22 3/4 in. 57.8 cm.  
Executed in 2001, number 1B from an edition of 1.  
\$ 300,000-500,000





HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC  
1864 - 1902

LE COIFFEUR, PROGRAMME DU  
THÉÂTRE LIBRE (DELTEIL 14;  
ADRIANI 40; WITTRÖCK 15)

Lithograph printed in colors on wove paper  
sheet: 12 1/4 by 9 1/2 in.  
32 by 24 cm.  
Executed in 1893; this impression is from the edition of  
unknown size with text (there is also an edition of 100 before  
text), published by Théâtre Libre as the program for the plays  
Une Faillite and Le Poète et le Financier.

\$ 2,500-3,500

JEAN BESNARD  
1889 - 1958

COVERED VASE

signed Jean Besnard / FRANCE  
glazed ceramic  
height: 10 in. 25.4 cm.  
diameter: 9 in. 22.8 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.  
\$ 20,000-30,000



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T.H. ROBSJOHN-GIBBINGS  
1903 - 1976

A PAIR OF TORCHÈRES FOR  
THE CASA ENCANTADA, BEL  
AIR, CALIFORNIA

each stamped with maker's label Sans Epoque/Robsjohn-  
Gibbings  
madrone and gilt metal  
83 1/4 by 12 by 12 in.  
212.8 by 30.5 by 30.5 cm.  
Executed in 1937.

\$ 80,000-120,000



## ARMAND-ALBERT RATEAU

1882 - 1938

### EIGHT CHAIRS FOR THE DINING ROOM OF JEANNE LANVIN, PARIS

three branded A A Rateau with production numbers  
carved giltwood, tooled leather and gilt cane  
40 by 19 1/2 by 17 in.  
101.6 by 49.5 by 43.2 cm.  
Executed circa 1921-1924.  
Together with four modern chairs of identical design executed  
by Peter Marino.

\$ 400,000-600,000

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# CLAUDIUS LINOSSIER

1893 - 1953

SHOWN FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

## CHARGER

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER 1930  
diameter: 20 1/4 in. 53 cm.  
Executed in 1930.

\$ 20,000-30,000

## CHARGER

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER  
diameter: 15 1/2 in. 39.4 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.

\$ 20,000-30,000

## CHARGER

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER  
diameter: 20 1/4 in. 52.7 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.

\$ 20,000-30,000

## VASE

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER  
height: 9 1/2 in. 23.8 cm.  
diameter: 5 1/2 in. 14 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.

\$ 15,000-20,000

## CHARGER

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER  
diameter: 15 1/2 in. 39.4 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.

\$ 20,000-30,000

## CHARGER

patinated metal  
impressed CL LINOSSIER  
diameter: 19 1/2 in. 49.6 cm.  
Executed circa 1930.

\$ 20,000-30,000



PAUL MANSHIP  
1885 - 1966

A PAIR OF "VENUS AND  
VULCAN" AND "ADAM  
AND EVE" CANDELABRUM

patinated bronze and marble  
height: 57 1/2 in. 146 cm.  
diameter of base: 12 1/4 in. 31.2 cm.  
Executed circa 1916.

\$ 100,000-150,000

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## ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO

1887 - 1964

### FEMME ASSISE

inscribed Archipenko, dated Paris 1912 and  
numbered 1/12  
bronze  
height: 15 1/2 in. 39.4 cm.  
Conceived in 1912.

\$ 120,000-180,000



## AUGUSTE HERBIN

1882 - 1960

### DANSE

signed herbin (lower left)  
oil on canvas  
36 by 28 1/4 in.  
91.4 by 73 cm.  
Executed in 1929.

\$ 80,000-120,000



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## ALEXANDER CALDER

1898 - 1976

### TIGHTROPE WALKER

incised A Calder (on the proper left leg); numbered  
2/6 (on each element)  
bronze, rod and string  
22 by 30 by 15 1/2 in.  
55.9 by 76.2 by 39.4 cm.  
Conceived in 1944 and executed in 1969.

\$ 400,000-600,000



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## HENRY MOORE

1898 - 1986

### RECLINING FIGURE

bronze  
length: 27 1/4 in. 75.6 cm.  
Conceived in 1957.

\$ 500,000-700,000



## HENRY MOORE

1898 - 1986

### FAMILY GROUP

signed Moore and dated 48, (lower right)  
colored crayon, pen and ink and watercolor on paper  
21 3/4 by 27 1/4 in.  
53.3 by 68.6 cm.  
Executed in 1948.

\$ 400,000-600,000





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## ALEXANDRE NOLL

1890 - 1970

### SCULPTURE (TÊTE)

signed ANoll  
ebony  
9 by 6 1/2 in.  
22.9 by 15.9 cm.  
Executed circa 1950.

\$ 15,000-20,000



## GIORGIO DE CHIRICO

1888 - 1978

### ETTORE E ANDROMACA

signed g. de Chirico (lower right); signed Giorgio de  
Chirico and extensively inscribed (on the reverse)  
oil on canvas  
15 by 15 1/2 in.  
38.1 by 40.3 cm.  
Executed in 1961.

\$ 250,000-350,000

## LYNN CHADWICK

1914 - 2003

### PAIR OF SITTING FIGURES VII

each stamped with the artist's monogram and with the  
Pangolin foundry mark and numbered 694 2/8  
bronze  
length: 18 in. 45.7 cm.  
Conceived in 1975.

\$ 60,000-80,000



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## JEAN ARP

1886 - 1966

### BUSTE SILVESTRE

inscribed *Arp* and with the foundry mark *E. Godard  
Fondeur* and numbered 4/5 (on the underside)  
bronze  
height: 17 in. 43.2 cm.  
Conceived in 1963.

\$ 150,000-250,000



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SYDELL MILLER

ROBERT GOOSSENS

1927 - 2016

A MONUMENTAL THREE-  
PART VANITY MIRROR

gilt bronze and mirrored glass  
94 1/2 by 68 1/4 in.  
241.6 by 174.6 cm.  
Executed circa 2001.

\$ 80,000-120,000





## BALTASAR LOBO

1910 - 1993

### MATERNITÉ N° 2, CARACAS

inscribed Lobo and with the foundry mark Susse  
Fondeur Paris and numbered E.A. 4/4  
bronze  
length: 28 3/4 in. 73 cm.  
Conceived in 1953.

\$ 100,000-150,000



## PABLO PICASSO

1881 - 1973

### PICHET GRAVÉ GRIS (ALAIN RAMIÉ 246)

inscribed Edition Picasso and Madoura, with the  
edition Picasso and Madoura stamps  
terre de faïence pitcher, painted and partially glazed  
height: 11 1/2 in. 28.2 cm.  
Executed in 1954; this work is from the edition of  
500.

\$ 8,000-12,000



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OF BEAUTY  
THE COLLECTION OF  
SYDELL MILLER

## JOSEPH WALSH

b. 1979

### "LILLIUM" LOW TABLE

ebonized bentwood and molded glass  
height: 23 3/4 in. 58.2 cm  
diameter: 65 1/2 in. 166.4 cm.  
Executed circa 2014.

\$ 80,000-120,000



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